Elsbeth Locher-Scholten

Women and the Colonial State

Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies 1900-1942

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Preface

In 1915 a Dutch family in Surabaya had its pictures taken in the studio of one of the famous photographers of the day. They took their Indonesian *babu* (nursemaid) along to be portrayed with their two children, in itself a highly unusual act. Pictures of a *babu* with children might occasionally be taken at home but very seldom in an official studio.

Jantje en Agnes in the care of Baboe Mina, Surabaya 1915 (KIT, Amsterdam).

Who they were we do not know. Only the name of the photographer remains, the Jewish Armenian Annes Kurkdjian. The three in the photograph are **anonymous, except for their first names noted in the photo-album, 'Jantje and** Agnes in the care ofBaboe Mina'. The album in which this picture was glued, got lost during the Japanese occupation of the former Netherlands Indies (or Dutch East-Indies) during the Second World War. It was one ofthe many that were rescued and collected by private initiative after 1945 and donated to the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam in the late 1970S.

Here I discovered the photo more than twenty years later at an exposition, when I was looking for illustrations for this book. Wardy Poelstra of Amsterdam University Press selected it from among many others for the cover. The **picture is not meant to be a romantic signal of the happy, albeit rather earnest,** relations within a colonial family. It offers a representation of both the literal and symbolic workload ofIndonesian women and serves as an emblem for the unequal gender and race relationships in the European household, in women's labour situations in rural Java, in the struggle for women's suffrage, and in the monogamy debate of 1937, which are the subject ofthe following essays.

The research for this volume was made possible by a grant from the Research Institute of History and Culture (Onderzoeksinstituut voor Geschiedenis en Cultuur) at Utrecht University, for which I am highly grateful. Not least because it also brought me, a colonial historian at Utrecht University, a part-time position at the Women Studies Department at the same university for the years 1992-1997. The creative academic community ofthe department chaired by Rosi **Braidotti offered me an inspiring environment in which to continue my** research on the construction of gender in colonial Indonesia. The interdisciplinary discussions with my colleagues in the monthly 'Intellectual Atelier' served as a sparkling context for this book. My sincerest thanks go to those with whom I worked most closely: Rosi Braidotti, Rosemarie Buikema, Esther Captain, Denise De Costa, Geertje Mak, Maaike Meijer, Boukje Prins, Berteke Waaldijk and Gloria Wekker.

Ofthe following essays, three have been published in slightly different forms before. The second chapter on female labour appeared as 'Female labour in twentieth-century Java. European notions - Indonesian practice' in Elsbeth Locher-Scholten and Anke Niehof eds., *Indonesian Women in Focus. Past and Present Notions* (rst imprint; Dordrecht /Cinnaminson: Foris, r987) 77-103 (znd imprint; Leiden: KITLV Press, 1992) 77-103. The third chapter concerning European discourse on Indonesian servants was published in *Indonesia* 58 (October 1994; Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY).' Chapter four which

deals with European fashion and food can also be found in Henk Schulte Nordholt ed., *Outward Appearances. Dressing State and Society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997). I am grateful to the editors of *Indonesia* and the KITLV Press for the permission to reprint the fruits of their editing labour.

Antoinette Burton, Frances Gouda, Maarten Kuitenbrouwer, Annelies Moors, Henk Schulte Nordholt, Marjan Schwegman, Berteke Waaldijk, and Saskia Wieringa read and commented on different chapters. Their sharp, clear and precise comments offered me the richness of their particular knowledge and put my thoughts in line. I owe them my warmest thanks for their strong intellectual and personal support.

Julia Suryakusuma (Jakarta) provided me with photographs from her aunt Maria Ullfah Santoso, one of the leading personalities of the Indonesian women's movement before (and after) the Second World War. Bart Plantenga reshaped my Dutch English and gave it a solid language base. Peter van Dijk, Edwin van Haaren and Wardy Poelstra from Amsterdam University Press provided the original manuscript with a highly appreciated professional outlook. I thank them all for their valuable contributions. Needless to say, the content of the following remains my full responsibility.

Spelling of Indonesian names always needs an introductoty remark. Here I use the present day Indonesian spelling, except for personal names which are kept the way they were written in the first half of the twentieth century. Married women, who omitted their first name and used their husband's name at the time, are given the prefix Mrs as was the normal practice in those days.

Notes

'Orientalism and the Rhetoric of the Family: Javanese **Servants in European Household Manuals', *Indonesia 58* (1994) 19-40. For a shortened version see Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'So Close and Yet So Far: The Ambivalence** of Dutch **Colonial Rhetoric on Javanese Servants in Indonesia, 1900-1942', in: Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda eds., *Domesticating the Empire. Race, Gender and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville/London: University Press** of Virginia, **1998) 131-153. Parts of the fifth chapter on the vote have appeared in a different context; see Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'The Colonial Heritage** of Human **Rights in Indonesia: The Case of the Vote for Women,** 1916-1941', *Journal Of Soutbeastdsian **Studies*** **30 (1999) 54-73.**

1 By Way of a Prologue and Epilogue: Gender, Modernity and the Colonial State

AFTER THE 'THE FAMILY OF MAN'

Other times, other photos. In the mid-I950S one could visit 'the greatest photographic exposition of all times' in Western capitals like New York, London, Paris, and Amsterdam. Presented under the title 'The Family of Man', it exposed the many faces of mankind in multiple shades of black, grey and white to the Western world: photos of people of all ages, places and races, in groups, in couples or alone, human beings in love, during pregnancy and birth, at games and in grief, at work and in their old age. From the happy Indian flute player displayed on the poster to the monumental photograph depicting the Assembly of the United Nation, this exhibition illustrated the optimism of that decade. Even now, the mild compassion with and smiling amazement about life glows from the pages of the catalogue.'

Since then the world has turned a few times. Other images, photographs and exhibitions have emerged, which show that the world is not the happy family of brother*lyl* sisterly connected races, classes, genders and ages that the immediate post-World War II culture would have us believe it was or was to become - in spite of the Cold War. The 'Family of Man' metaphor carried and still carries numerous ambivalent connotations. Anne McClintock has recently laid bare its colonial and racist roots.t Its nineteenth-century origin was far from egalitarian. In many countries the metaphor of the state as a happy family has served as a means of obscuring social and economic cleavages or to mask authoritarian regimes. The meaning of the word 'Other' has turned 180 degrees, changing from designating your neighbour to be respected or even as a term for God (the complete 'Other' in Barthian Protestant theology), into the stereotyped member of another race. 'White' has been recognised as a racial colour with social and economic consequences. Second-wave feminism has led to a renewed acknowledgement of the deep-seated character of gender differences.

It is against this background of altered perceptions and representations of human relations that this book evolved. lts central theme is an analysis of how gender differences were constructed, reconfigured, and maintained in the Netherlands-Indies (or Dutch East-Indies) in close (dis)harmony and, or intersecting with the differences of race, class and that for long underrated aspect of socio-political relations - religion. The colonial context allowed for, and stimulated, a full display of these categories. lts history thus offers positive possibilities to study the subject of 'difference' in its many varieties.

WOMEN AND THE COLONIAL STATE

Historians of women and gender in colonial Indonesia are catching up with their colleagues who worked on the same subject in the former British colonies; they started publishing earlier and have done more) The early dissertation of Cora Vreede-de Stuers on Indonesian women, published in '959-60, lost its unique and isolated position in the late '980s and '990S, when among others the impressive work of Ann Stoler and Jean Gelman Taylor appeared.s Works on women in twentieth-century colonial Indonesia for instance, now include colonial discourse analyses and representations of gender and gendered language,S as well as empirical studies of different aspects of women's lives, such as education and missionary activities," Indonesian feminism,7 the emancipation of Chinese women.f and the role of white women in the colony.s

The following five essays cover subjects little researched before: labour legislation for women and female rural labour; domestic servants in colonial households; European fashion and food patterns in the colony; the struggle for the women's right to vote; and marriage legislation. They are centred around the relationship between women of both the Indonesian and the European population groups, and the colonial state or 'the colonial project'.'? How did specific groups among Indonesian women, especially from the educated elite, express their relation to the colonial state? To what extent and how did European women participate in the colonial project; to what extent did they wish to do so? How did authorities of that colonial state perceive women of both races and different classes; how did they include or exclude them in their policies? The question of whether or not we should 'rescue history from the nation-state' which has been posited elsewhere," is not of prime importance here. While it is a blessing that historical scholarship has extended its view beyond the borders of the nation-state, the latter still remains a historical category, which has changed in content and form and has to be studied in a colonial context as well." Many present-day nation-states in Asia and Africa are its

(not altogether too happy) inheritors. There is even more reason to keep the nation-state in focus, now that new political history studies have come to include political culture, mentalities and values, and observe actors beyond the narrow realm of politics itself. It is in that broader context that 'the colonial state' of the title should be understood.

How should the other terms of the title: 'women' and 'gender' be read? Women were never the essentialised homogeneous category that European women, in their naive late 1960s feminism considered it to be.[4] Class, race, and religious differences determined and still determine different positions. Here I focus on European and Indonesian women of specific subgroups.[5] both as historical agents and as subjects of government policies (such as labour legislation, marriage laws, and voting rights). The latter offers illuminating examples of (male) colonial discourse on women, both among the colonial and colonised groups.

To broaden the analysis of 'women', the notion of gender has become a highly useful category, designating that 'women' and 'men' are biological specimens as well as cultural constructions.[6] Gender denotes perceptions of male and female, femininity and masculinity, structuring relationships of hierarchy and power in society. It thus offers an example of what Rosi Braidotti has called in another context 'regulatory fiction' or 'normative activity', and serves as a multi-layered concept, both in terms of social context (race and class) and epistemological meanings." As a product of culture, it is socially situated and historically produced: a valuable object of historical research. Speaking about women and gender implies speaking about men and masculinity, a subject which has also become popular in colonial studies.[7] Although masculinity is mentioned incidentally, I concentrate on gender in its female aspects.

The questions about the relationship between gender and the colonial state cannot be answered without an analysis of the ways in which European and Indonesian women were perceived and/or 'imagined' in the colony by men and women across the colonial divide, as well as how they presented and perceived themselves. Images of others imply visions of self in more complicated patterns than in mere binary oppositions. What kind of relationship can we discern between these perceptions and imaginings of other and self? What were the implications of these perceptions for women of the Indonesian and the European population groups as citizens or subjects of the colonial state?

A volume of five essays on gender in colonial Indonesia cannot he comprehensive.[8] The choice of these five 'female' topics is legitimized by their relevance for the relationship between women and 'the colonial project' and by the variety of the themes which illustrate specific historical aspects. Access to

source material, an important criteria in the pursuit of historical research, also had to be taken into account. For these themes I relied on various sources, such as censuses, periodicals, agricultural reports, the Ministry of the Colonies archives, Indonesian press surveys, children's literature, and household manuals.

All the chapters concentrate on the same time span: the period from 1900, when a new modernisation policy (the so-called Ethical Policy) was being introduced, until '942, when Japan conquered the Archipelago and Dutch colonialism virtually came to an end. Specific emphasis is given to the years between the two World Wars, which were also the heyday of colonial modernity and the time period of the late colonial state.

All chapters focus on Java. When studying women in colonial Indonesia, this can hardly be avoided. Political life in colonial Indonesia was centered in Java; it was the most developed, the most 'colonized' and the most densely populated island in which the largest numbers of Europeans (80 %) and the largest numbers of Indonesians (almost 70 %) lived. Indonesian feminism was born and developed here. Most of the limited source material on Indonesian women **- be it on their labour conditions or their organisations - derived from Java.** This volume on women and gender thus stands in the java-centric tradition, which colours most of Indonesian historiography.'9

H,STOR,CAL CONTEXT

In order to install the following chapters in a broader historical framework, a **few remarks characterising Dutch colonialism and developments in twentieth century Indonesia may serve as an introduction to the content and** thernes.?"

Although the Dutch have been present in the Indonesian archipelago since the early seventeenth century, a full-fledged colonialism developed only in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In approximately 1900 the territory of the area fell under the full control as a result of intensified Dutch military **action and extension of the colonial civil administration. Indigenous princes** could no longer escape the grasp of the ever-extending Dutch arm, reaching **outward from the capital Batavia. Technical and economic changes as well as a** new psychological mix of both Western superiority and social concerns resulted **in a renewed sense of a 'civilising mission' and a more active colonial policy.** Inspired by the contemporary popularity of the term 'ethical' and the normative culture of the period, it was named Ethical Policy, the Dutch variant of the **British 'white man's burden' and the French *'mission civilisatrice'*. Its architects** aimed at the development of both the land and its people and had a form of (limited) self-government under Dutch leadership following the Western

model in mind. The growth of exports - tropical agricultural products, oil and rubber - which lasted more or less uninterruptedly until the world economic crisis of the 1930S, *slowly* stimulated development in that direction. In the 1920S and 1930S, the Ethical Policy *lost* its progressive nature and turned into mere conservatism, aimed at maintaining *'rust en orde',* tranquillity and order."

Postcard from the 1930S: The Netherlands Indies on the map of Europe.

Contrary to British liberal abstention in colonial matters, Dutch colonial practices were highly detailed. The British civil servant J.S. Furnivall characterised Dutch welfare policies of the period - and Dutch colonialism in general – as one of concerned tutelage over children: 'All these people want to help so much: "let me help you", you can almost hear them say, "let me show you how to do it, *let me do it for you*"'.[22] Yet Dutch colonialism could never 'do it' completely, if only for reasons of sheer numbers. Compared to a population of 60 million Indonesians in 1930, the European population counted only 240,000 persons, or a mere 0.4 percent of the total. Of that less than half percent, II3,00o, were women. Even if this was a relatively large group, compared to the European presence in other South and Southeast Asian *colonies,* its numbers were little more than the inhabitants of a middle sized town, living in a territory which - when spread across a map of Europe – reached from Ireland to the Ural.[23] It presented some practical limitations to colonial activities to say the least.

In the framework of this Ethical Policy, the formation of the modern state proceeded cautiously through administrative and political reforms. This process followed patterns of state formation in Europe, albeit at a different pace and with more reluctance; colonial democracy would never be more than a caricature of its Western predecessors. The extension of the territory of the colonial state around '900 combined with the growth of a colonial bureaucracy and a limited extension of democratic institutions. City and other councils were introduced in and after the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1918 a proto-parliament with limited powers, the People's Council or *Volksraad* was opened. In 1925 its advisory function evolved into one of eo-legislative authority. However, because the Indies government held the final word and could even be overruled by the Ministry of the Colonies in The Hague, this council never represented more than a shadow of responsible government.

'Dualism' (or better yet 'triadism') characterised Dutch colonial rule. In the twentieth century, Dutch colonial law recognised three distinct legal groups: so-called 'Europeans', 'Foreign Orientals' (Chinese and Arabs), and Natives (Indonesians). Officially legitimized by differences in legal needs, it resulted in a 'legal apartheid', which took different forms in different domains. Despite some Ethical Policy attempts to abolish this system in the twentieth century, racial stratification remained the cornerstone of the colonial structure, whether it was of the legal system, civil service or education.s-

In spite of this effort toward legal clarity, however, the population groups were never the neat, homogeneous categories the law suggested. The Indonesian population group of 60 million reflected the spectrum of regional, religious and class diversity of the archipelago. Urban Minangkabau Muslims differed from Javanese princes and Madurese *tani* (peasants), the orthodox Islamic *santri* differed from its *abangan* fellow believer, influenced by Javanese cultural practices. The group of Europeans included white administrators, rich plantation owners, Protestant and Catholic missionaries, the poor Indo-European clerks, and their families. This group consisted of different subgroups: the Dutch citizens (the so-called *totok* born in Holland, and those born in the Indies, whether they were 'white' or Eurasian); citizens of other Western countries (British, German, ere) and of some Asian states with comparable law systems; and Indonesians who had been 'equalised' to Europeans as a result of their education and lifestyle.[25]

Following upon the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, connections with Europe greatly improved. Changing life styles due to modern inventions (such as the automobile and electricity and cars) made the colony attractive to greater numbers of *totok* from the Netherlands. Between '905 and '930 their numbers

more than doubled in Java and Madura. This growth also included women. Impediments to women attempting to emigrate from the Netherlands to the Indies diminished, marriage prohibitions imposed on women from the metropole were lifted, concubinage of Europeans with their Indonesian housekeepers *(nyai)* became outdated.'6 Between the 1880s and '930S the male/female ratio among Europeans changed considerably: from 471 women per 1,000 men (,880) to 884 per 1,000 ('930). In '905, 4,000 European women born in Europe, were counted in Java; in 1930, there were 26,000.[27]

Legal distinctions turned up in administration and education. Unlike the British system in India, where the civil service was partly unified, the Dutch and the Indonesian civil service, the Interior Administration *(Binnenlands Bestuur,* BB) and the Native Service *('Inlands bestuur)* retained their separate functions, while the Foreign Orientals were administered by their own 'captains'. Dutch civil servants depended on their Indonesian colleagues for their exertion of power. Although the latter were usually of noble origin *(priyayi),* they remained of inferior status to their 'older brethren', Dutch civil servants.

Triadism characterised education as well. The Ethical Policy expanded educational possibilities, from a simple rudimentary form for the peasant population to Western Dutch language schooling for the Indonesian elite. An intricate web of private and public schools, of village, European, Dutch-Chinese and Dutch-Native schools *(Hollands-Chineesche* and *Hollands-Inlandstbe Scholen)* and different secondary schools evolved during this period, where pupils of the three population groups remained separate. Only at the high school level, in vocational training institutes and in universities - not founded before the '920S - did adolescents of Indonesian, Eurasian or Dutch descent meet each other in class.

Girls education followed similar dualistic lines. The expansion of education reached them as well. Between '920 and '930 for instance, the literacy rate among Indonesian women increased more rapidly than that of the men. On Java, it grew from 9 to 13 percent. It was an urban phenomenon, and an achievement of the Indonesian female elite in the first place. However, despite the rapid increase of literacy among both male and female Indonesians in the '920S (from a little more than 1.5 million to nearly 4 million), illiteracy still remained the norm. In '930 1Q percent of all Indonesian men on Java and Madura could read and write either in one of the Indonesian languages or in Dutch, while only 1.5 percent of the Indonesian women of that region could do so. Those who were able to write in Dutch comprised less than one half percent ('36,000) of the native population in Java, of which about one quarter (34,000) were womcn.v Due to the late start of the univer-

sity system the academic elite comprised an even smaller group of a few hundred graduates only.

In the years between the two World Wars, two manifestations of nationalism – one Indonesian and one Dutch - broadened the colonial divide. Dutch nationalism found an organised outlet in the Europe-oriented conservative Patriotic Club *(Vaderlandsche Club),* which in 1929 proclaimed the permanence of the colonial relationship. It encouraged the repression of Indonesian nationalism, the older and the more enduring of the two forms of nationalism. In the early 1900s Japanese and Chinese examples of revolution and victory over the West provided Indonesians with new Asian models of hegemony. Education (geography) brought about a new sense of Indonesian territoriality and national identity. Starting as a loosely-structured movement or *pergerakan,* Indonesian nationalism developed into a full-fledged modern political party system during the 1920s and 1930s. National parties evolved out of organisations that expressed a regional consciousness (of being Javanese, Minangkabau or Minhasan) into national structures, and from organisations that looked for the practical lessons in modernisation to be learnt from the Dutch, into self-reliant institutions aiming at national independence.

The many Indonesian parties of the time can be divided along ideological lines in a secular, religious (Islamic), socialist/communist and traditionalist stream. Although the Islamic party *Partai Sarekat Islam,* one of the oldest in a country that was 90 percent Muslim, could look back on the loosely organised mass support of the 1910s, it was surpassed by the secular party, *Partai Nasional Indonesia,* in the 1920s. The latter gained ascendancy when the communist party, *Partai Komunis Indonesia,* was prohibited after its abortive revolt of 1926-1927. In the conservative 1930s the Dutch colonial government exiled the PNI's most famous leader Sukarno, as well as the leading personalities of successive secular parties, Mohammad Hatta, Sutan Syahrir and others. Confining party membership largely to the cities, it attempted to separate the nationalist movement from the rural areas with some success. In the mid-rojos, the merging of different small secular groups created two larger secular parties, *Parindra* and the more leftist *Gerindo.*[29]

In 1936 the neo-traditionalist group of *priyayi* and civil servants offered the moderate plea for a Round Table Conference to discuss the colony's political future. The so-called Petition Sutardjo won the support of the People's Council. When the Dutch government two years later rejected it, Indonesians realised that they could no longer hope for any political reforms. This furthered a new, more united front of all the different parties and movements, the *Gabungan Politik Indonesia (Gapi,* or Indonesian Political Federation). As a

Raden Ajeng Kartini in 1902 (KIT, Amsterdam).

result of the voluntary monogamy debate of 1937 (see chapter 5 of this volume), the Islamic parties had founded a federation in the MIAI *(Majelis Islam A'laa Indonesia)* as well.[30]

Women in this period organised themselves along similar ideological lines, as they also sought unity. In the 1920S nearly every town in colonial Indonesia had a women's organisation, while nationalist parties and the modernist Muslim a-political movement *Mubammadiyab* either included (educated) women or had more or less independent women's branches."

The gender issues they struggled for first of all concerned cultural and social questions. Indonesian feminism is acknowledged to have started with the Indonesian *priyayi* daughter, Raden Ajeng Kartini (1879-19°4), renowned for her book of letters written in Dutch.[32] For a long time her threefold fight for the education of women, the promotion of monogamy and a re-evaluation *of]* avanese culture, had been the standard for Indonesian feminism, even if this

fight ended tragically in her polygamous marriage and her premature death in childbirth. Some thirty years long the emerging women's movement remained focused on similar social issues. One might even question whether the label **feminism applies at all, since feminism presupposes not only the creation of** women's organisations but also a general questioning of gender inequalities as well as the struggle to change these inequalities.f Due to its colonial context, **Indonesian women sought national awareness and unity more than confronta-**tions with men regarding gender issues. In view of the growing unity and grad-**ual politicisation of Indonesian women's organisations I will use both terms: the women's movement and feminism. Their history shows the many faces of feminism.**

In December 1928, the first Women's Congress led to a federation of **women's organisations, which in 1930 came to be called the** *Perihatan* ***Per-*** *himpunan Isteri Indonesia* (PPII or Federation of Indonesian Wives' Organisa-**tions), Although it claimed its position within the nationalist movement, it** refrained from political issues in order to prevent conflict. In '930, the newly formed *Isteri Sedar* (the Conscious Woman) was the first to opt openly for **political activities. It influenced the women's movement at large, which became more alert to economic questions, labourers and the problem of illiteracy** among the rural population. *Isteri Indonesia,* formed in '932 by a fusion of other **socio-economic women's organisations, applied this program as well, albeit in a more moderate manner. Three years later the** ***Kongres Perempuan Indonesia*** (KPI, Indonesian Women's Congress) was organised. It was to be held every **three years, and was based on nationalism, socialism, religious neutrality and** 'womanhood' *(keperempuanan).* The KPI replaced the PPII, which was disband-ed. All its efforts would be directed to the improvement of society as a whole, but issues of politics and religion would still be avoided. Women of the urban middle and upper classes were the most active and consequently profited most from these efforts.t-

This striving for national unity by both Indonesian men and women in the **late 1930S was inspired by a growing distrust in Dutch concessions for change** and the emerging threat of war. Although some of the leaders feared Japan's anti-democracic **tendencies, this prominent neigbour was also considered the** only alternative for realising independence. The Japanese victory over the colo-nial army in March 1942 was to finally usher in the long end of the Dutch empire in the Indonesian archipelago.

CONTENTS

The chapters of the book are part of this general history while they delve more deeply into various aspects of it. But they do more than simply inscribing women into this history. Writings about gender in a colonial context reveal the iniquities and inequalities of the colonial system at its most uncompromising, not because white women tended to be more racist than white men nor because Indonesian women were more susceptible to racism, but because the category of gender also sheds light on other categories of difference. The following essays thus clarify the ambivalences of colonial mentalities and their effects on people, social institutions and discourses, in short on the widely divergent worlds of the racial population groups in the Netherlands Indies.

The second essay 'Female Labour in Twentieth Century Colonial Java: European Notions - Indonesian Practices' starts with the perceptions of rural and industrial labour by Indonesian women, as expressed by the male European and Indonesian elite. Members of the People's Council, the Indies proto-parliament, debated the matter extensively during the 1925 debates on female night labour and differed in opinion on whether Indonesian women worked for economic reasons or because of *adat,* Javanese customs. Their perceptions are compared to the 'realities' of female agricultural labour as they read from other historical sources, such as census and agricultural research reports. Part of their labour could indeed be retraced to cultural patterns, but women's work originated first and foremost from economic necessity. Moreover, it did not imply a neglect of their families, but rather derived from women's concrete daily responsibilities for their off-spring. This responsibilty was expressed in close cooperation with their husbands, 'as two oxen before the plough'.

The third chapter 'So Close and Yet So Far': European Ambivalence Towards Javanese Servants' offers an analysis of European perceptions of another aspect of JavaneselIndonesian female (and male) labour: those of Indonesian domestics within the European household. To European women domestic servants were often the only Indonesians they met - coming close to the skin, yet always kept at a safe distance. The analysis is based on European household manuals and children's fiction, both highly prescriptive sources as to the correct ways to behave. The representation of Javanese servants by European women furnishes views of these racial others as well as elucidating the strongly ambivalent feelings among Europeans about those household

members. It also gives us an insight in the construction of whiteness and the images of self of these European women as clean mothers and teachers to their servants. This task provided them with a self-appointed 'white woman's burden', comparable to that of their husbands in the colonial project.

The construction of whiteness or 'Europeanness' is also the subject of the fourth chapter 'Summer Dresses and Canned Food: European Women and Western Lifestyles'. Household manuals and the women's pages of magazines and newspapers offered an entrance to the normative discourse regarding fashion and food among European women in the Netherlands-Indies. This discourse illustrated and stimulated the ever greater attraction of Europe and the growing distance from Indonesian culture that these European women developed. Living within the framework of the colonial nation-state they shared a Europeanised colonial culture, an illusionary Netherlands in the Tropics, with their husbands.

The fifth chapter 'Feminism, Citizenship and the Struggle for Women's Suffrage in a Colonial Context' addresses questions regarding the struggle for women's voting rights, which was won in September 1941, but for the election of city councils only. Archival material from the Ministry of the Colonies, parliamentary reports, journals and press reviews provide the source material for the analysis of this subject. The struggle offered Europeans and Indonesians, men and women, the opportunity to voice their perceptions of femininity and their imaginings (or the lack of imaginings) of a female citizenship. Women, organised along racial lines in an Indonesian women's movement and a European feminist movement of Dutch women, remained at a safe distance from one another, although both expressed their desire for female representation in the colonial state.

The last chapter 'Marriage, Morality and Modernity: The '937 Debate on Monogamy' deals with more examples of both official and public opinion on gender: the colonial draft legislation on voluntary monogamy for Indonesians and the ensuing debates of 1937. The public struggle regarding this (abortive) Western attempt to regulate Indonesian Muslim family life sheds a sharp light on the relationships and allegiances of Indonesian feminists, nationalists, the Muslim parties and the colonial government. The draft itself was rooted in racial as well as class and religious differences. Originally it was meant to protect European women from eventual polygamous practices of the Indonesian men they chose to marry, but its regulations were extended to the small group of Indonesian elite women who desired a monogamous relationship. Drawing on the same kind of material as chapter four, I focus on the fierce verbal battle and demonstrations against the draft ordinance among Indonesians of all Islamic

signature, modernists as well as traditionalists, Javanese *abangan* as well as orthodox *santri*. Due to strong Muslim protests the draft never even reached the People's Council.

Although each essay can be read separately, they share some common themes. These are connected to the theoretical concepts that inspired me: Orientalism and the construction of whiteness, colonial modernity and gender, and female colonial citizenship. These themes also organise some concluding remarks, offered here by way of introduction.

ORIENTALISM, GENDER AND CLASS

No exploration of the cultures and societies affected by European imperialism can ignore Edward Said's *Orientalism*,35 His analysis of the European perceptions and imaginations of the colonised has sharpened our scholarly views and broadened our research questions. Palestinian by birth and a literary scholar in the us by profession, Said drew attention to a centuries-old tradition in Western literature and scholarship of stereotyping the Oriental other as different and inferior. He made visible the binary opposition between coloniser and colonised in Western intellectual processes and laid bare the mechanisms of fossilising and dehistoricising cultural and political forms in the world East of the Suez Canal. Moreover, Said postulated the political purposes of all Western knowledge on the Orient, which was produced as an instrument of colonial power and authority. With his statements about politicised knowledge, he reminded historians of the inherently biased roots of their colonial source material and of the critical function of their profession.

Said has offered us a new view of the colonial past. Prior to the 1970s, the history of colonialism had already undergone some major shifts, varying from a focus on the colonised instead of the coloniser to a reformulation of the theories of imperialism and colonial state formation. The study of new research subjects and new theories was effectively stimulated by new source material from now accessible colonial and other archives and a renewed analysis of already known material. Said now flung open the gates of colonial discourse as a legitimate field of research. His overall concepts have had a highly stimulating influence on colonial scholarship and have laid the groundwork for the field of 'colonial studies'. The recent inclusion of 'the colonial' within the historiography of Western identity, and of colonial influences on the formation of European culture and civil society, takes this approach one step further,36 As a point of departure for questions and analyses, the concept of Orientalism has thus been highly useful, also for this study.

However, Said's ideas should be adopted with care and caution. In the past twenty years he has received praise as well as criticism. I list some of the latter, relevant to this study. The absolute dichotomy between 'we' and 'they', 'us' and 'them' has been questioned and has become outdated. Culture, even colonial culture, is constantly recreated in a dialogue or contest between the different contributors and participants, even when occupying unequal power positions.v Plus Said seemed to deny the agency of the colonised themselves. Yet the Orient informed Orientalists. In the early nineteenth century British scholars on India, for instance, got their knowledge from Indians of the Brahmin group, who were serving their own interests, and thus their strategies should be taken into account."

Moreover, the discourses of both groups themselves appeared to be more pluralistic than Said considered them to be. Overlooking internal contradictions and debates Said created a homogeneous or monolithic colonial discourse. Yet, it was the debate betvveen various factions in the colonial project that produced a cultural exchange or modernity, as anthropologist Peter van der Veer has stated recently. Western knowledge regarding the Orient was not a uniform and closed system, as Said has it, but was produced in specific places at specific times. It thus has its own historicity.[39]

Feminist scholarship has added the criticism of Said's male bias.[40] Women as authors or subjects of Orientalist texts or as agents in a colonised context are almost completely absent." They do not figure prominently in his early work at all; not as subjects/actors, as objects/victims nor as anything in between. The Oriental Other, which Said constructed as a classless male category, can be deconstructed according to gender and class. Indonesian women, for instance, may well have been double or triple others, other as Indonesians, other as women, others according to class.

Incidentally, Said describes the Western sexualised representation of the Middle East as the consequence of the sexual preoccupations of the West, or in other words the East as a paradise of sexual male fantasies in an era of Victorian moralism and prudery. He also alludes to the perception of the East as feminine versus the masculine West." Yet, he does not elaborate upon this theme of gendered discourse, which can be characterised, in general, as a broader literary practice that labels opponents or the unknown in universally recognisable terms.f Nor does he pay attention to the psychoanalytical opportunities colonial texts may offer, as Homi Bhabha has pointed out. According to Bhabha, colonial discourse was less an instrumental intention of the West to control the East than an unintended instrument to express and control unconscious desires and fears.[44]

These criticisms have led to an overall fragmentation of Said's postulates: no absolute dichotomy between coloniser and colonised; interactive agency by the colonised; a differentiated, gendered and class-bound subject; and multiple colonial discourses often expressed in gendered language, masking hidden motives. Scholars on colonialism have tested Said's concepts, refined their instrumentality, sharpened its lenses. Some of these patterns can be recognised in the Indonesian context.

Indonesian women were viewed as others, 'steeped in adat and religion', as one European feminist summed up a common European perception in the '930S.45 Recourse to *adat* (indigenous customs and law) itself, which developed as a regular field of scholarship in twentieth century colonial Indonesia, held Orientalising connotations. Codification of *adat* led to a conservative freezing of indigenous law practices, marking juridical differentiation. It served conservatives in more than one of the cases I cite here: labour legislation, women's suffrage and the debate on monogamy.

However, Dutch opinions were rarely in unison and static, as debates on these same subjects illustrate.[46] In the discussion in the *Volksraad,* or People's Council on the 1925 draft concerning female night labour (chapter 2) moderate Dutch representatives, supported by Indonesians, wanted to change Indonesian rural family structures to contemporary European ideals of the woman as 'the angel of the house', always present for her children. Their political opponents, Dutch industrial managers, expressed their conservative and 'Orientalist' perceptions of Indonesian peasant women and their work, which better served their industrial interests. Following their native life patterns and customs *(adat)* Indonesian rural women were considered to be completely opposed to the Western tradition of family life. The result of this collision of opinions was a hesitant first step on the path to social state care: the regulation of night labour among women.

European men (and women) also disagreed regarding the rights of Indonesian women to vote (chapter 5). Until the end of the struggle in '94', internal debates among champions of the cause and conservatives frustrated the introduction of this right. Here again, the argument of *adat* and religion (Islam) provided opponents to female suffrage with Orientalising perceptions of women: neither *adat* nor Islam would allow for the introduction of this Western 'acquirement'. Indonesian spokespersons were divided on the issue as well.

Child marriage offered another opportunity for debate among Europeans (chapter 6). While in the '920S conservative civil servants opted for government prohibition of this 'evil', the moderate Adviser of Native Affairs preferred a more moderate approach. He wanted to refer the matter to private initiative,

because he considered the subject too sensitive and too private for effective management by the government.

Colonial discourses on women differed not only according to political positions of European men, thus marking inter-European differences. They could also vary within the texts of one person, revealing internal fragmentation of opinion and deep-seated fears. Indonesian servants (see chapter 3) were certainly the ultimate other - different in race, class and religion. On the other hand they were the closest to the European families, encountering them in the most intimate instances of the house. Their presence offered many possibilities for ambivalence, fears and desires, as expressed in the textual representations of this social group.47

European perceptions of colonised women in the Indies were indeed far less uniform than the ones Said found for the colonised in general. What strikes one the most, is their divergent views with respect to class. Whether it concerned labour and work, the female enfranchisement or marriage law, in all instances colonial perceptions followed the class divisions which existed within JavaneselIndonesian society such as those between the elite *(priyayi)* and the peasant population. In the twentieth century the younger generation of noble descent *(priyay,)* largely received Western education, moved to the cities and took positions in the colonial administration, education and journalism. Western notions of a woman's proper place and the family were guiding principles in colonial policies concerning female labour, enfranchisement and marriage of this *priyayi* class. Indonesian educated elite women should follow Western patterns of the modern woman as wife and mother. Not only was education for this group geared to a model of 'housewifisation'rf but ideally women of this class should live in monogamy in order to strengthen family life and to provide society with better educated offspring, able to develop as thrifty and trustworthy subjects of the colonial state.t? In its policies regarding this female class the colonial government followed the same evolutionary model, that it tended to use with the male *priyayi.* In the colonial authorities' opinion, this class was the first to reap the fruits of an 'uplifting' education and its 'association'with the West (see chapter 2).5[0]

While colonial authorities considered women of the Indonesian elite open to education and change, they thought women of the rural masses should be left in their own cultural environment as much as possible. Voting was already limited for men of all population groups, whether Europeans, Foreign Orientals or Indonesians, by exigencies of literacy and census. Hence, the right to vote for city councils, which was the only voting rights that a small elite group of literate and tax paying women ultimately acquired in '94', would not

be extended to rural women. Interference in the rural women's marriage customs such as child marriage, divorce and polygamy was consciously avoided in the years between the two World Wars. Voluntary monogamy would not impinge on their behavioural practices. Ultimately, colonial policies towards women and the family were mainly directed at women of the elite."

Dutch colonial Orientalism with regard to gender was thus a 'qualified' one. It was class-specific. 'Othering' and 'essentialising' into static patterns of difference occurred first and foremost with relation to rural women, the class which was most distant and strange to the colonial bureaucrats. This was not only a means of handling the unknown, but it served pragmatic and opportunistic reasons as well. Female labour was an important asset to European agriculture and thus should not be hindered by a prohibition of female night labour. The government recognised its limited power to control child marriages and based its non-interference with this aspect of life on a certain acknowledgement of its own limitations. While the chapters thus underline the aforementioned fragmentation of Said's postulates, they confirm his point that Western knowledge production on the Oriental other was political and geared to purposes of governance and self-interest.

Yet, there is one remarkable exception to the general pattern of a Dutch class-bound Orientalism. European women did not express the class distinction between *priyayi* and rural women to the same extent as European men did. As housewives responsible for their servants, these women shared the contemporary political attitudes of ,uplifting' and 'education' with their husbands. However, their rhetoric on servants did not mention class differences (chapter 3). This could perhaps be explained by the dominant position these women had over their servants. Yet in their struggle for female suffrage European feminists overlooked this relevant category as well (chapter 5). In the early 1900S the Javanese feminist and *priyayi* daughter Raden Ajeng Kartini (1879-1904) was the darling of the Dutch because she inspired their social and political expectations of Indonesian elite women. Twenty years later, however, Dutch feminists in the Indies seemed to have forgotten her exemplary function. In line with the general conservatism of the two decades before the Second World War these feminists defined Indonesian women as 'not yet educated' or as 'steeped in adat and religion', thereby conflating educated Indonesian women with the rural majority (chapter 5). In their hesitation about the chances of the suffrage for Indonesian women, these colonial feminists did not seem to realise that the mass of Indonesian women would not profit from this right. Limited for men as well, they would reach women of a select class only, those of the educated elite.

This difference between a class- and non-class-bound 'Orientalism' of Dutch men and women in the Indies can be attributed to social circumstances; it was certainly not part of {nature' or female genetic structures. While Dutch men met Indonesians of various classes in their work, Dutch women were focused on, and enclosed within, their households, families and the social relationships among Europeans. If they came in contact with Indonesians, they did so mostly through the work contacts of their husbands. Until the preparation for war in the early '940s, when European urban women became involved in public activities of civil defence, they met few women of other population groups, and then only in restricted numbers.[52] The discourse analyses in the following chapters all point to the social isolation or 'apartheid' of Dutch wornen.v In the Netherlands Indies of the years between the two World Wars, the binary opposition between women of the East and the West was in most cases a social and political reality. Individual exceptions to this pattern did occur, for instance between women in the missions.v However, the general discourse on Indonesian women by Dutch women expressed the existing social distance. Indonesian fiction of that period, in which Europeans do not figure, reveals the same patterns, confirming Said's general dichotomy between coloniser and colonised after all. They remained so close yet so far.

WHITENESS AND 'EUROPEAN-NESS'

The interaction of the three categories of gender, class, and race, also becomes obvious when analysing perceptions of and by European women. In recent historiography, the role of white women in colonialism has been the subject of critical analysis, compressed succinctly into the opposition of 'complicity' and 'resistance'. Were white women participants and perpetrators within the colonial project, its opponents or its victims?55 The examples of this book conform to the notion of McClintock (and many others) that European women were 'not the hapless onlookers of empire, but were ambiguously complicit both as colonisers and as colonised, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting',56 The struggle for women's voting rights for instance, offers a fine example of this situation. When Dutch women crossed the equator, they lost their voting rights, which they had won in '9'9 in the Netherlands. In their struggle for this right in the Indies they firstly opted for the right to vote for themselves, basing their argument on their contribution to the colonial project.

Colour of skin always expresses itself in contrast to other colours. Although in the Western world whiteness may still be seen as the common unnoticed denominator or a non-colour, whiteness is a colour as well, with many expres-

sions. As Ruth Frankenberg has argued, 'whiteness needs to be examined and historicized (...). Whiteness needs to be delimited and "localized"'.57 How has the West looked at its own whitenessi'f

For European women in the colony whiteness was not a self-evident category, white was not an 'essential colour to be unconscious of',59 as it was in (contemporary) Europe. Coming out in ever larger numbers - generally at a **young age - into an 'expatriate' community, Dutch-born,** ***totok*** **women felt** forced to formulate their racial identity. Whatever their social background in the metropole might have been, in the Indies they automatically became part and parcel of the hegemonic colonisers class.[6o] As one of them stated slightly **ironically, 'Isn't it true, every European woman in the Indies is a lady?'61 These 'ladies' reframed their identity in their behaviour towards servants, in choosing** their clothing - an all important symbol of social starus - and in their struggle for suffrage. They formulated their identity with ever stronger connections to 'patria' (Europe). Their 'long-distance culture', as Henk Schulte Nordholt, fol**lowing Ben Anderson's 'long-distance nationalism', has aptly defined it, was** expressed in various culrural and political repertories of difference between West and East such as those of dress and cooking, of monogamy and female suffrage." **It was anti-Indonesian because these women refused to acknow**ledge their locale; they could have been siruated anywhere in the world.

Yet 'whiteness' may not be the most appropriate notion in a colony in which Indo-Europeans of mixed blood legally belonged to the 'European population group'. In party politics and culrure twentieth-cenrury Indo-European men and women choose overwhelmingly for Europe and for Dutchness. Highly **aware of their European legal status and their concomitant position in colonial** hierarchy, Indo-European women organised themselves in the '930S. The women's organisation of the largest Indo-European political party, the Indo-European Alliance *(Indo-Europeesch Verbond),* explicitly formulated its self-**image in immediate relation to Dutch norms and values.[63]**

In their responsibility for domestic servants, in their efforts to Europeanise colonial culture and in their struggle for women's suffrage, European women inscribed themselves full-heartedly within the colonial project without paying **much attention to the Indonesian social settings. Therefore, as illustrated in** the following chapters, in line with these women's culrurallonging, their legal **position and their colonial affiliation, the term** 'Europeanness' **is preferred to 'whiteness'.**

COLONIAL MODERNITY AND GENDER

The topics of the following chapters can all be arranged under the heading of 'modernity'. As a result of the fierce academic debates on the notion of the 'post-modern' of the last fifteen years, the term modernity has won great popularity. As an umbrella term it encompasses the 'grand' notions of post-Renaissance and Enlightenment's history: the application of rationality, the development of capitalism and industrialisation, including concomitant long-term processes, such as urbanisation, consumerism and individualisation. But it also refers to the longing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for progress, development and 'the modern' as well as the attraction of twentieth-century 'modern' objects like cars and telephones. With the acknowledgement of national, regional, or local variations of modernity, its recent use has been extended to the plural: 'modernities'i'v It is modernity in its longing for progress and 'the modern', that makes it useful as a narrative label for the various chapters on gender in colonial Indonesia. The notion offers an encompassing framework regarding the subjects of this study, while its content illuminates some aspects and paradoxes of this phenomenon with regard to gender in a colonial context.[65]

Labour legislation, women's suffrage and monogamy were issues of modernity; state concerns with these topics were an expression of the same. Debates about servants fit into larger patterns of the 'modern' household, while fashion itself formed part of a modern commodification process. It has recently been argued that modernity encompassed both colonial authority and nationalism, the Ethical Policy as well as nationalist ideas[66] In line with this statement we can argue that it encompassed both the Indonesian women's movement and European colonial feminism. Women of the two population groups were affected by and also affected modernity in congruent ways.

European housewives broadened their roles to issues of hygiene and health; they 'professionalised' their activities by training and organising themselves and they took up the self-appointed task of educating their servants (chapter 3). By wearing Western summer dresses European women were definitely part of 'the modern'; it was 'modernity that introduced fashion as a new phenomenon in the colony' (chapter 4).[67] Not only their dresses, but also their feminism was part and parcel of modernity (chapter 5).

For Indonesian women European clothing was not a primary concern: Javanese girls attending Dutch school began to dress in European clothing in the '920S, adult women would do so only in the '950S after independence. Yet,

women of the educated elite, whether secular or Islamic, stimulated modern motherhood and hygiene." But it was education that developed as one of the strongest pillars of their modernity. As mentioned above, since the days of Kartini education for women - whether for girls, adults, or later the masses - stood first on the agenda of Indonesian feminism. During the 1920S and 1930S many of the leaders of the Indonesian women's movement had themselves been trained as teachers. Their main support came from women educated in various institutions, whether public or private, secular or Islamic, high school and vocational school in rapidly increasing numbers.[69]

In the first half of the twentieth century, these women crossed the fluctuating boundaries between private and public, a line which in Indonesian society had never been absolute. As of old, rural women occupied a visible position in economic life. Even if elite women were more secluded, this seclusion had never reached the almost total invisibility of women in the Middle East. Now they entered the modern world of emancipation abhorring of a future as 'domestic drudges', and they came more actively to the fore in newly developing public institutions such as newspapers, women's organisations and political debates. These women acted as the most visible symbols of cultural change; their emancipation presented the most explicit form of liberation and of modernity?" The prime examples of their agency came out of the cities, for the 'modern' was a largely urban phenomenon, and this was no different in the colony'?'

Secular feminists agreed on another central issue, the battle against polygamy, also introduced by Kartini. However, it would be too easy to read the fierce Islamic protests against their modern monogamy struggle as a purely anti-modern opposition. Even if some opponents to modernity got their inspiration from that source, it was not only fear of modernity that stimulated Islamic protests against voluntary monogamy for Indonesian women on an unprecedented scale (chapter 6). These protests revealed a more complicated convergence of both anti-modernity and anti-colonialism. The Islamic community as a whole refused a modernity directed from above by a *kafir* (heathen) government. For that reason the colonial state's attempt to influence the family - the centre of Islamic culture - was doomed to fail. By putting marriage and polygamy on its own agenda - as Islamic organisations did in the wake of the state ordered debate of 1937 - Islamic modernity formulated its own forms, independent of foreign norms and values as much as possible. Thus modernity did not necessarily imply secularisation as an unavoidable consequence; Islam selected its own appropriate points from the modern repertory.

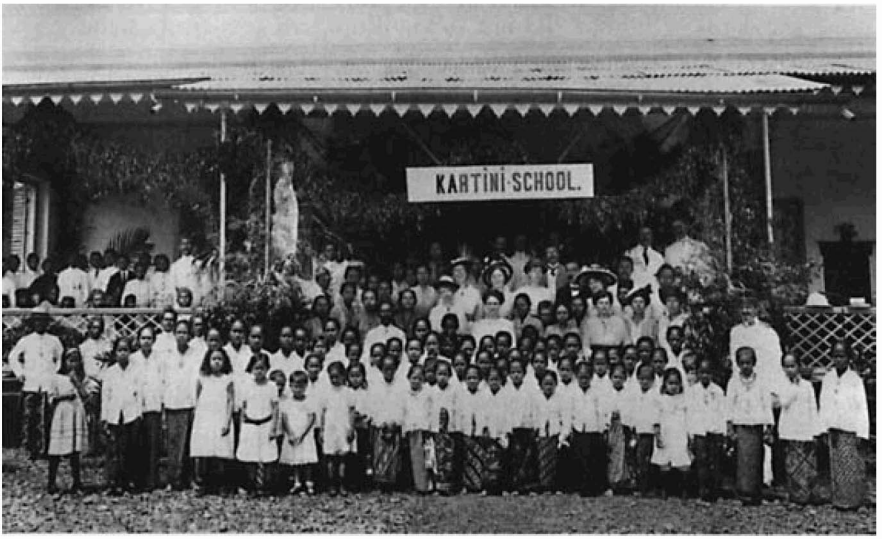
This is not to deny that anti-modernity existed. It did among both population groups: Europeans who denied the right to vote to women and Indo-

nesians who blocked monogamy for purely orthodox reasons. Both could find support for their argument in *adat* and Islam, and both did so.[72] The anti-modern colonial position found its clearest expression in what has been called 'the most threatening form of modernisation', the democratising of colonial government.[73] In conservative colonial eyes denial of the right to vote for women from the Indonesian elite 'shielded them' from modernity. That these anti-modernists gave in in r941, was for practical exigencies only: the threat of war meant that they had to win loyalty and support of as many indigenous groups as possible.

Nowhere in the world did modernity follow a straight course. But in the colonial context, it met with even more hesitation and ambivalence than in the West. It was hampered by colonial fears about the loss of Indonesian traditions and culture, which would endanger political tranquillity and ultimately Dutch sovereignty. It was thus a 'half-way' measure of 'gendered' and 'classed' colonial modernity, which Indonesian women experienced: night labour of rural women was regulated but not forbidden; servants were to be educated but kept at a safe distance; European fashion in the Indies did not refer to an Indonesian context but focused on Europe instead; political rights were something that was denied to women for a long time and would have been granted - had it not been for a strong opposition - to Dutch women only; monogamy should be introduced to a select group of the Indonesian elite, but was also meant to protect Dutch women, who might chose to marry Indonesian Muslim men.

The debate on modernity includes the question of the Western origin of the 'modern'. For many Indonesians of the early twentieth-century elite, Dutch culture and education opened the doors to modernity, as educated Javanese women enthusiastically confirmed in 1914. But, although modernisation and colonialism have often been conceived as 'tandem developments', it would be a simplification 'to conflate colonialism, modernity and Westernisation', as Vickers has pointed out. Modernity's culture came from many more directions other than just the coloniser alone. Processes of *totokisation*, Westernisation and modernity were inflenced by American culture, Parisian fashion,]apanese examples, and Islamic reforms in the Middle East and during the process took particular Indonesian expressions.Pt

For Indonesian women, for instance, modernity did not just come from colonial authorities, state sources or Dutch culture alone. In fact, it was external pressure from the International Labour Organisation (1LO) that prompted the colonial government to initiate social legislation. Through its educational policies for girls the government introduced modernity. But this modern edu-



Pupils, teachers, and board members of the new Kartinischool at its opening in 1915, Batavia (KIT, Amsterdam).

cation for girls was not a governmental prerogative; it was offered by private European institutions (the Kartini and Van Deventer schools, and the missions) and the modernist Muslim movement on a larger scale.[75] Nor did modernity come from Dutch women's organisations. In the early 1930S their modern ideas about households, hygiene and female participation in politics found expression in the apolitical Association for Housewives in the Indies and the politically-inspired feminist Association of Women's Rights in the Indies. Yet, despite the participation of a few Indonesian members, both institutions largely confirmed existing patterns of social distance or 'apartheid', as chapters 4 and 5 on fashion and women's suffrage illustrate. Female solidarity across the colonial divide did not exist nor did it come into being over common goals. **In** the Indies Dutch feminists did not forge alliances with nationalist men and women, as female British theosophists and left-wing (Irish) revolutionaries had done in British India, albeit in 'maternalist' forms. Although Theosophy inspired early Javanese nationalism, European women never made a name for themselves in that movement nor in the Indonesian women's movernent.Z'

To Indonesian women of the 1920S and 1930S Dutch women rarely served as role models. 'I have so longed to make the acquaintance of a "modern girl"', Kartini wrote to her new Dutch pen pal in 1899, which she understood to be a

self-confident woman working (like herself) in and for society and of high moral standards.:" But she did not follow European modernity blindly; she sought to reshape Javanese values and culture. Moreover, she actually fought a struggle for modernity on two fronts: against a hegemonic Western modernity and against a traditional Javanese society.'" She, however, never totally broke with the latter. Her love for her father and her fear of 'black magic' by a menacing suitor made her choose for a polygamous marriage in 1903, thus remaining within traditional Javanese boundaries. Her new ideal was to work alongside her husband to develop her people through education at home, but this was never realised because of her premature death one year later.

Kartini, now a national Indonesian heroine, set the stage. Many educated Javanese women in later years framed their gender identity along similar lines. In r9r8, for instance, Sriati Mangoenkoesoemo, who was personally affiliated with the first Javanese nationalist association *Budi Utomo*, argued that 'the Javanese woman', educated as she might be, should not opt for a Western lifestyle of equality, but should strive for 'her own destiny'. She should educate herself to be a better mother to her children and a better partner to her husband. This did not mean being his 'plaything': on the contrary she should 'consciously serve [him] and, by it, reign'Z? In the 1930S, women from the Association of Indigenous Civil Servants, the PPBB, voiced similar opinions. Educated Javanese *priyayi* women should stand beside their husbands to develop women of the lower classes and seek the harmony they had sought and not found in Western thought, in their own culture.i? In the late 1930S male and female authors in the nationalist press repeatedly emphasised, that Javanese women should not lose their 'female' qualities of *'ibu yang sejati'* ('the true woman'). Their education, economic independence, social activities and political participation should not harm or endanger their central position within their harmonious marriages and family lives.[8r] In view of these common ideals, it may be considered as consequential that in the marriage debate Indonesian feminists, although personally in favour of monogamy, stuck to Indonesian values and preferred an all-Indonesian harmony of Muslims, nationalists and themselves above codified monogamy (chapter 6). They thus claimed their right to fashion a 'modern' national culture, that was not Western.[82]

Twentieth-century modernity, however, offered women of both population groups one common emblem, that of modern motherhood. Yet this would not bridge the colonial divide. The centrality of this notion for both racial population groups permeated all debates on and by women. Modern mothers, healthy, hygienic and caring for the upbringing of their children, were considered the carriers of modernity by Europeans and educated Indonesians. Some Euro-

pean and Indonesian men considered all women to belong at home and not to work at night. However, as good mothers Indonesian rural women indeed worked to support their families (chapter 2). European women considered it their - and other European women's - duty to be like mothers to their Indonesian domestics (chapter 3). Early protests against polygamy by Indonesian women were inspired by similar notions of motherhood and harmony in the family (chapter 6). The modernist Muslim movement fostered these ideals as well.

This maternal role should be extended to the society at large. Motherhood inspired women of both population groups to join in a 'maternal' or 'familial feminism' (chapter 5). Women should be responsible for the social issues of the nation-state. Their motherhood ideals influenced their blueprint of a 'new woman', one who would be moral, responsible and active in society at large. Both feminisms frowned upon the idleness and luxuries of Western and Westernised women in the colony. Both voiced chaste protests against liberated sexual mores.t' Yet, colonial power differences and racial distance prevented this shared ideology of a modern motherhood from serving as a common ground for (political) actions of Dutch and Indonesian feminists together. It has been argued recently that 'marriage and motherhood are always imaginaries in the making' instead of 'essential categories' and may even become part of the struggle between colonial and nationalist groups.[84] Here these 'imaginaries' of motherhood remained enclosed within each group. In the colonial state, modernity followed and actually acerbated existing racial differences among women.

NATION-STATE AND FEMALE COLONIAL CITIZENSHIP

Colonial modernity also implied the process of colonial state formation. In the Western world the process of state formation resulted in the creation of the nation-state, by which the government extended its authority over civil society and by which civil society influenced or even determined government action. Eventually, the state found its modern legitimation in the nation, as Anderson has stated.[85] Perceptions and imaginations of nationhood and nationalism simultaneously stimulated and were stimulated by this proccss.t" The extension of citizenship through education, social welfare, voting rights and organised labour was the visible sign of these changes.

Yet, modern colonialism never brought a whole-hearted emulation of the West to the Rest.[87] At most it aimed at the construction of reformed subjects as 'almost the same but not quite'.ss Or as Partha Chatterjee has claimed:

> *The colonial state, we must remember, was not just the agency that brought modular forms of the modern state to the colonies; it was also an agency that was destined never to fulfill the normalizing mission of the modern state because the premise of its power was a rule of colonial difference, namely, the preservation of the alienness of the ruling group.*[89]

The question of whether one can speak about colonial citizenship, a citizenship of the colonial state at all, or whether this alludes to a strident *contradictio in terminis,* is a valid one. In legal language it is indeed impossible; the law only recognised Dutch citizenship. After 1892 this Dutch citizenship was legally restricted to those born of Dutch descent, excluding those merely born on Dutch territory; blood became more important than place of birth. In '910 the colonised were defined as Dutch subjects; they could never become more than that - except for those Indonesian women who married Dutch men and acquired their husband's legal status as European as well as Dutch citizen.?? However, similarly to Western state formation the colonial state attempted to encourage the creation of a colonial nation, a corpus of socio-political allegiance to state authority with which the colonial state increasingly claimed the right to interfere.?' Just like modern states produced modern citizens through education, political participation and welfare policies, colonial state formation produced 'citizens of the colonial state'. For colonial state formation was also a cultural project, although of divergent accessibility for the various races, classes and gender.

Hence, if we agree that colonial nation-state formation took place, including racial inequalities, its history should be expressed not just in legal concepts, but also in the wider setting of the cultural notions of (female) citizenship. Despite the legal definitions of the time, cultural policies within the colonial state allowed for the creation of a new group of subjects-with-citizens-rights, even if these rights like voting, freedom of speech and political organisation were limited and remained restricted to the educated (male) Indonesian elire.s- In the 1920s and 1930s the colonial government formulated its own ideal on proper female citizens. As can be deduced from the chapters 5 and 6, they should be of European legal status and Indonesian only if educated enough and monogamous, moreover socially involved and politically inactive.

To some extent we can also situate Indonesian nationalism within the framework of the struggle for citizens' rights in the colonial state (rights of representation, organisation and freedom of expression), from which Indonesians were excluded. The struggle of these citizens' rights dominated colo-

nial policies from the '91OS right up to '942. But nationalism implied more: it revealed the ambivalences of these claims. For while the nationalists opted for these rights within the colonial nation-state, they 'imagined' - if we follow Ben Anderson's terminology - another nation for the future: independent Indonesia.

This ongoing process of the creation of a colonial citizenship - besides an 'imagined' Indonesian one - allows us to analyse debates on and by women in terms of female citizenship of the two nations. European women considered themselves part and parcel of the colonial project. As the analysis on domestic servants revealed, they viewed their educational and 'uplifting' duties towards their Indonesian domestics as comparable to those of their husbands. In fashions and food they behaved like so-called 'incorporated wives', in line with their husbands' professional and social roles in the same state. European women involved in the struggle for female suffrage based their claims for voting rights on their participation within the colonial project as female citizens of that state. In short, European women were most expressive in their opting for a female colonial citizenship.

Indonesian women were more ambivalent. Following the Muslim opposition to the draft on voluntary monogamy of '937, Indonesian women's organisations preferred a united Indonesian women's movement and a more Indonesian solution to the problem of polygamy and divorce beyond government-imposed marriage laws. They sacrificed their own private desires for an improved marriage life and opted for a partnership within the Indonesian community. That implied a female citizenship of the future Indonesian state. But they remained ambiguous. In those same years they continued to strengthen their efforts to gain the right to vote in the colonial state, in which they finally succeeded in '94'. This ambivalence can be partly explained by the distinction between the 'state' and the 'nation', made by the Indian historian Partha Chatterjee. In identifying 'state' and 'nation' with the public and private sphere respectively, Chatterjee has put forward that Indian nationalism opted for a removal of 'difference' in the public state sphere and for a modernisation independent of the coloniser's culture in the private sphere of the nation.s' Yet, the opposition private-public may easily be misunderstood.s't The Indonesian women's actions for suffrage was a state-directed struggle for equality indeed, while its choice to side with Indonesian Islam and nationalism against the colonial monogamy draft was a commitment to an Indonesian 'nation', Contrary, however, to similar nationalist debates about women in India, the argument that women belonged to the private realm, not to be touched by colonialism, was not voiced by secular nationalists in Indonesia.

The monogamy debate extended this double private sphere of the family and 'nationinto the public domain. It made women and the rhetoric about women transgress the borderline between private and public and politicised them both.

Indonesian and European women were thus involved in the process of colonial state-formation in various ways, both as subjects and objects. The colonial nation-state of the twentieth century had to recognise the subject of gender. The following chapters will illustrate in more detail just how women and the colonial state interacted.

Notes

The Family Of Man. The Greatest Photographic Exhibition Of All Time - 50J *Picturesfrom 68 Countries* - *Created by Edward Steichen for the Museum Of Modern Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1955). I have vivid memories of visiting this exhibition as a young high school student.

2 Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather. Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York/London: Routledge, 1995).While Barthes criticised the masking of class and race differences of the exposition by putting 'Nature' before 'History', McClintock extended this critical approach to gender. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, '957) 173-176.

3 For instance Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid, *Recasting Women. Essays in Colonial History* (New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1989). Also Barbara N. Ramusack, 'From Symbol to Diversity: The Historical Literature on Women in India', *South Asia Research* 10, no. 2, 1990, 139-157; Malia B. Formes, 'Beyond Complicity versus Resistance: Recent Work on Gender and European Imperialism', *journal Of Social History* 28, nO.3 (1995) 629-641; Christine Doran, White Women in Colonial Contexts. Villains, Victims and/or Vitiators of Imperialism?', in: Harry Poeze and Antoinette Liem eds., *Lasting Fascinations. Essays on Indonesia and the Southwest Pacific to Honour Bob Hering* (Stein: Yayasan Soekarno, 1998) 99-n6.

4 Cora Vreede-de Stuers, *L'emancipation de la ftmme Indonesienne* {Pans/The Hague: Mouton, 1959), also published in English as *The Indonesian Woman. Struggles and Achievements* (Paris/The Hague: Mouton, 1960). Ann Stoler, 'Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Colonial Rule', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 (1989) 134-161; 'Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in zorh Century Colonial Cultures', *American Ethnologist* 16 (1989) 26-51, also in: Jan Breman ed., *Imperial Monkey Business: Racial Supremacy in Social Darwinist Theory and Colonial Practice* (Amsterdam: CASA, 1989) 35-70; 'Carnal

Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and Morality in Colonial Asia', in: Michaela di Leonardo ed., *Gender at the Crossroads: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 51-101; 'Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (1992) 514-551; Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia. European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983).

5 See Ann Staler's work, mentioned in note 4, plus articles of Ann Stoler and Jean Gelman Taylor in Laurie J. Sears ed., *Fantasizing the Feminine in Indonesia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996); Frances Gouda, 'Good Mothers, Medeas or Jezebels. Feminine Imagery in Colonial and Anticolonial Rhetoric in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942', in: julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda eds., *Domesticating the Empire. Race, Gender and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998) 236-254.

6 Rita Smith Kipp, 'Emancipating Each Other: Dutch Colonial Missionaries' Encounter with Karo Women in Sumatra, 1900-1942', in: julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda eds., *Domesticating the Empire. Race, Gender and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlotteville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998) 2II-235; Sita van Bemmelen, 'Zwart-wit versus Ideur. Geschiedschrijving over Indonesische vrouwen in de koloniale periode', in: Francisca de Haan et al. eds., *Het raadsel-orouuxngescbiedenis. Tiende Jaarboek voor vrouwengeschiedenis* (Nijmegen: Sun, 1989) 1-44.

7 Susan Blackburn, 'Western Feminists Observe Asian Women: An Example of the Dutch East Indies', in: Jean Gelman Taylor ed., *Women Creating Indonesia. The First Fifty Years* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1997) 1-21; Susan Blackburn and Sharon Bessel, 'Marriageable Age: Political Debates on Early Marriage in Twentieth-Century Indonesia', *Indonesia* no. 63 (April 1997) 107-141.

8 Myra Sidharta, 'The Making of the Indonesian Chinese Woman', in: Elsbeth Locher Scholten and Anke Niehof eds., *Indonesian Women in Focus. Past and Present Notions* (Leiden KITLV Press, 1992) 58-76; Faye Yik-Wei Chan, 'Chinese Women's Emancipation as Reflected in Two PeranakanJournals (c. 1927-1942)' *Archipel49* (1995) 45-62; Charles A, Coppel, 'Emancipation of the Indonesian Chinese Woman', in: Gelman Taylor, *Women Creating Indonesia, 22-51.*

9 For instance, Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995) 75-118, 157-193; Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire.* The bibliography in Van Bemmelen, 'Zwart-wit versus kleur', 46-50, offers earlier titles.

10 As the Dutch sociologist JA.A. van Doorn has characterised Dutch presence in the Indies. JA.A. van Doom, *De laatste eeuw van Indii. Ontwikkeling en ondergang van een kokmiaal project* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1994).

11 Prasenjit Duara, quoted in Frances Gouda and julia Clancy-Smith, 'Introduction', in: Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire,* I-20, esp. 6.

12 Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments. Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); also Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick

Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda', in: Frederick Cooper and Ann Lama Stoler eds., *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1997) 18.

13 See the criticism of Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses', in: Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres eds., *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991) SI-80. For an analysis of the meaning of 'woman' see Denise Riley, *'Am I that Name?'. Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History* (London: MacMillan, 1988). Needless to say that 'women' in the title of this book are not conceived as a universal category.

14 For women of Chinese descent see the literature mentioned above note 8.

IS jean W. Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *Americal Historical Review* 91 (1986) IOS3-107S.

16 Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects, Embodiment and Sexual DijJerence in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) IS6-1S7. Braidotti underlines three levels of sexual difference: between men and women, between women, within each woman. The research program of the Netherlands Research School of Women's Studies focuses on gender as a dimension of personal identity, as a principle of social structure and as a basis for normative dichotomies (gender as femininity).

17 Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity. The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate' Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester New York: Manchester University Press, I995).

18 For instance, I do not deal with the female body and the colonial state control of maternity, and I do so only indirectly with the indigenous concubine or *nyai* (chapter *S)*. See for the first Kalpana Ram and Margaret Jolly eds., *Maternities and Modernities. Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1998); for the second Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'The Njai in Colonial Deli. A Case of Supposed Mediation', in: Sita van Bemmelen et. al. eds., *Women and Mediation in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1992) 265-280; Brigitte Muller, *Op de wipstoel De niet-gewettigde inheemse vrouw van de blanke Europeaan in Nederlands-Indii (I890-I940). Een literatuuronderzoek naar beeldvorming en werkelijkheid* (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 1995); James T. Siegel, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997).

19 For exceptions to this rule see for instance Rita Smith Kipp, 'Emancipating Each Other', in: Clancy-Smirh and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire,* 2II-235; Sita van Bemmelen, 'Zwart-wit versus Idem'.

20 The didactic truism that the acquisition of knowledge starts with the simple and evolves to the more complex provides the reasons to frame the content of the book in just such a way.

21 Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten. Vijfstudies over koloniaal denken en doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische Archipel I877-I942* (Utrecht: Hes, 1981) 201.

22].S. Fumivall, *Nether/and India. A Study of Plural Economy* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press/Macmillan, 1944) 389.

23 *Volkstelling I9lo. VI. Europeanen in Nederlandsch-Indie* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936), 131. In British India the British with a population of nearly 3°0,000, in 1931 accounted for no more than 0,05 percent of the total population. In Ceylon and the Malay Peninsula British presence of respectively 40,000 and *34,000* accounted for nearly I percent of the total population. The French presence in French Indo-China (40.000) barely reached 0.2 percent.

24 C. Fasseur, 'Hoeksteen en struikelblok. Rassenonderscheid en overheidsbeleid in Nederlands-Indie', in: C. Fasseur, *De weg naar het paradijs en andere Indische geschiedenissen* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1995) 139-171.

25 *Volhtelling I930· VI. Europeanen* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936) 23, *25,40,* 68, 70, 78, 79· Dutch nationals comprised 87%, 'equalised' Indonesians 4% and other nationalities 9%. Non-Western nations included Japanese, Filipinos, Thais, and Egyptians. The term *totok* also refers to those Chinese in Indonesia, born in China. Here I will only use the term with reference to Europeans.

26 Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*.

27 A. van Marle, 'De groep der Europeanen,' *Indonesie* 5,4 (1952) 320-321.

28 *Volhtelling I930. VIII Overzicht voor Nederlandscb-Indie* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936) 29-31, 1I0-III.

29 Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion. Popular Radicalism, I9I2-I926* (Ithaca and London: Carnell University Press, *1990);* Robert Cribb and Colin Brown, *Modern Indonesia, A History since I94S* (London and New York: Longman, 1995) 9-13.

30 J. van Goor, *De Nederlandse kolonien. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse expansie* (The Hague: Sdu, I994) 255-296.

31 Of these *Pasundan Istri,* the sister organisation of the Sundanese *Pasundan* party, and *Aisyiyah,* the female counterpart of *Muhammadyah,* were the most vocal.

32 *Door duisternis tot licht. Gedachtenover en voor het]avaanse volk van RadenAdjeng Kartini* (jth imprint; Amsterdam: Nabrink, 1975; rst impr. 19II); EG.P. Jaquet ed., *Kartini. Brieoen aan mevrouw R.M Abendanon-Mandri en baar echtgenoot en andere documenten* (Dordrecht-HollandlProvidence USA: Foris Publications, 1987); Joost Coté, translation and ed., *Letters from Kartini. An Indonesian Feminist, I900-I904* (Clayton: Monash University/Hyland House, 1992).

33 Maria Grever; *Strijd tegen de stilte. [obanna Naber (I8S9-I9I4) en de vrouwenstem in geschiedenis* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1994) 31-32. Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London New Delhi: Zed Books Kali for Women, 1986) 2.

34 J.M. Pluvier, *Overzicht van de ontwikkeling der nationalistiscbe beweging in Indonesii in de jaren I930 tot I942* (The Hague-Bandung: Van Hoeve, 1953) 148-151; Kongres Wanita Indonesia ed., *Sejarah Setengah Abad Pergerakan Wanita Indonesia* {Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1978) 15-57; S.E. Wieringa, *The Potiticization of Gender Relations in Indonesia. The Indonesian Women's Movement and Gerwani until the New Order State* (Ph. D. thesis University of Amsterdam: 1995) 71-87.

35 Said, Edward W., *Orientalism* (jd imprint; London and Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987; First imprint 1978).

36 For instance, Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf 1993); Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire. Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham/London, Duke University Press, 1995); Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather,* Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1997) 1-56; Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity;* for a Dutch example see Maria Grever and Berteke Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid De Nationale Tentoonstdling voor Vrouwenarbeid in I898* (Amsterdam: IISGIIIAV, 1998).

37 For a successful attempt to overcome this distinction see John Pemberton, *On the Subject* of'Java"(Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1994), McClintock, *Imperial Leather,* Sara Mills, *Discoursesof Difference. An Analysis ofWomen's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991).

38 Peter van der Veer, 'The Foreign Hand. Orientalist Discourse in Sociology and Communalism', in: Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer, eds., *Orientalism and the PostcolonialPredicament* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993) 23-44.

39 Peter van der Veer, 'Introduction', in: Peter van der Veer ed., *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity* (New York/London: Routledge, 1996) 1-22, esp. 14. Historians, working on India, have pursued the concept in a more structural way than Indonesianists.

40 For an illuminating discussion of Orientalism and gender see Mills. *Discourses of Difference,* 47-63.

41 Said only deals with one female author, Gertrude Bell. Mills, *DiscoursesofDijftrence, 13.* In his *Culture and Imperialism,* Said shows more interest in the role of women and the feminist movement in European imperialism.

42 Said, *Grientalism,* 190, 3II-316.

43 Tropes of gender, easily recognisable to a general public, are a common instrument in depreciating others; research into this practice cannot do without research into the historical context, because in itself these tropes do not explain but merely illustrate these oppositions. See for instance Frank Costigliola, 'The Nuclear Family: Tropes of Gender and Pathology in the Western Alliance', *Journal ofDiplomatic History* (1997) 163-180. For labelling in the Indonesian historical context: Frances Gouda, 'Good Mothers, Medea's or Jezebels: Feminine Imagery in Colonial and Anti-Colonial Rhetoric in the Dutch East-Indies, 19°0-1942' in: Gouda and Clancy-Smith, *Domesticating the Empire, 236-254;* F. Gouda, 'Languages of Gender and Neurosis in the Indonesian Struggle for Independence 1945-1949, *Indonesia* no. 64 (October 1997) 45-76. See also chapter 2.

44 Homi K. Bhabha, 'Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism', in: Francis Barker et. al., eds., *The Politics ofTheory* (Colchester, Eng: Essex University 1983) 194-211; Pamela Pattynama, 'Secrets and Danger: Interracial Sexuality in Louis Couperus' *The Hidden Force* and Dutch Colonial Culture around *19°°',* in: Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire,* 84-1°7. For a methodological critique of Said on the relationship between the Orient and Orientalism see also Robert Young, *White Mythologies. Writing History and the West* (LondonINew York: Routledge, 1990) II9-140.

45 'Buitengewone vergadering', *Maandblad van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenrechten in Nederlandsch-Indie,* VI 6, March 1932, no page number.

46 On inter-European differences and gender see also Ann Stoler, 'Rethinking Colonial Categories', 134-161.

47 One of the heritages of the colonial past is the many stories on close, warm contacts with servants. It is one of the common themes in the interviews, collected by the Oral History Project Indonesia 1940-1962, *Stichting Mondelinge Geschiedenis Indonesie I940-I962,* located at the Royal Institute of Anthropology, Leiden.

48 See Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'Colonial Ambivalencies: European Attitudes towards the Javanese Household (19°0-1942)', in: Juliette Koning et. al., eds., *Women and Households in Indonesia. Cultural Notions and Social Practices* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2000) 28-44·

49 H.E. Steinmetz, *Oorzaken der mindere welvaart. Onderzoek naar de mindere welvaart der Inlandscbe bevolking van}ava en Madoera. XII* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1914) 6.

50 One might argue that the modern Muslims, living in the cities, occupied middle-class positions. Except for political control, colonial state policies, however, did not heed to this specific group: *priyayi* groups were preferred. Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia I9oo-I942* (Singapore etc.: Oxford University Press, 1973).

51 This is confirmed by an analysis of colonial policies with regard to female education and to the Javanese household. See for the first Sita van Bemmelen, 'Enkele aspecten van het onderwijs aan Indonesische meisjes, 1900-1940 (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of History, University Utrecht, 1982). For the latter: Locher-Scholten, 'Colonial Ambivalencies'.

52 Yik-Wei Faye Chan, 'Feminist and Scholar: The Student Days of Dr. Thung Sin Nio in the Netherlands', [Unpublished paper presented at the 'First Colloquium on the Chinese in Europe', Paris, 1995] 8.

53 Letters from Dutch women to their mothers prove the same. Henk Schulte Nordholt, *Het dagelijks leven in Indii I937-I947* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1999); Eveline Buchheim, 'Geschreven levens. Brieven van Nederlands vrouwen in Indie 1919-194°' (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Political, Social and Cultural Sciences, University of Amsterdam 1999).

54 For instance Van Bemmelen, 'Zwart-wit versus kleur'; Rita Smith Kipp, 'Emancipating Each Other'.

55 Nupur Chauduri and Margaret Strobel, eds., *Western Women and Imperialism. Complicity and Resistance* (BloomingtonlIndianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992). See chapters 3 and 4 in this volume.

56 McClintock, *Imperial Leather,* 6. See also the work of Stoler, ChaudurilStrobel and Gouda.

57 Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women. Race Matters. The Social Construction Of Whiteness* (New York/London: Routledge, 1993) 231.

58 See also Young, *White Mythologies.*

59 Frankenburg, *White Women.*

60 For a critical Indonesian appraisal of the class of the European population group, Siegel, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution,* 105-107.

61 Beara van Helsdingen-Schcevers, *Indie en Europa. Fragmenten. Causeriein en beschouwingen over het leven in Ned. Indie over de vrouw en het kind en hun belangrijke problemem,* (Leiden: Leidsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1929) 177.

62 Henk Schulte Nordholt, 'Introduction', in: Henk Schulte Nordholt ed., *Outward Appearances. Dressing State and Society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV, 1997) 1-37, esp. 14

63 P.W. van der Veur, *Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of Eurasians of Indonesia* (lthaca, 1955). For the women's organisation of the Indo-European Association *(Indo-Europeesch Verbond Vrouwen Organisatie)* see E. Locher-Scholten, 'Metzer, Cornelia Hendrika', in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* (Electronic Data, Institute for Dutch History, The Hague, 1997).

64 Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990); Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis. The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: Free Press, *1990);* Stuart Hall, 'Introduction', in: Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben eds., *Formations of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press/Open University, 199) 1-16; Adrian Vickers ed., *Being Modern in Bali. Image and Change* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1996) 4; Maila Stivens, 'Theorising Gender, Power and Modernity in Affluent Asia', in: Krishna Sen and Maila Stivens eds., *Gender and Power in Affluent Asia* (London: Roudedge 1998) 11-13. For the plural see also Kalpana Ram and Margaret Jolly eds., *Maternuies and Modernities. Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). An example of its recent popularity: half of the books mentioned in the Dutch Central Catalogue of Books with 'modernity' in the title, have been published in the 1990S. The term is used in all aspects and disciplines of the arts, and regards publications on both the recent and the more distant past.

65 For an overview of feminist critique on modernity as 'a maculinist construct' which should be gendered, see Stivens, 'Theorising', 12.

66 Siegel, *Fetish,* 148. Shiraishi, *Age in Motion,* 27-28; Ruth McVey, 'Building Behemoth: Indonesian Constructions of the Nation-State', in: Daniel S. Lev and Ruth McVey eds., *Making Indonesia. Essays on Modern Indonesia in Honor of George McT. Kabin* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program Cornell University, 1996) 12.

67 Henk Schulte Nordholt, 'Introduction', 14-

68 Jean Gelman Taylor, 'Costume and Gender in Colonial Java 1800-1940', in: Schulte Nordholt, *OutwardAppearanees,* 8s-n6, esp. 86; Noer, *Modernist Muslim Movement.*

69 Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 27-37; 160-163. Gouda, *Dutch Culture,* 75-n7. For a beautiful and clarifying example of what this meant on a private level see the novel written in Dutch by Soewarsih Djojopoespito, a modern Indonesian woman, *Buiten het gared Indonesiseheroman.* (and imprint; Utrecht-Amsterdam: De Haan-Vrij Nederland, 1946).

70 For that reason they also were the protagonists of a new literature. Vickers, *Being Modern,* 18; also Siegel, *Fetish,* II5-r60; Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 51-62; EIs Postel-Coster, *Het omheinde kweekbed. Maehtsverhoudingen in de Minangkabause ftmilie-roman* (Delft: Eburon, 1985).

71 Dons Jedamski, 'Mabuk Modern and Gila Barat - Progress, Modernity and Imagination. Literary Images of City Life in Colonial Indonesia', in: Poeze and Liem, *Lasting Fascinations,* 167-186.

72 This similarity offers another example of the complexity of the phenomenon of 'Orientalism'. The orthodox Indonesian speaker in the People's Council, opposing the female vote on religious grounds, will not easily be characterised as an 'orientalist'. **But** the appeal to religion and tradition by colonial policy makers who voiced their reluctance to modernity, exemplifies the orientalist discourse of the Said tradition in its most pure forms.

73 Vickers, *Being Modern,* 12.

74 Vickers, *Being Modern,* 9. For aspects of the origin of the modern in Indonesia discussed here see Giddens, *Consequences,* 174-q6; Takashi Shiraishi, Age *in Motion.* 27-32; Anthony Reid ed., *The Last Stand of Asian Autonomies: Responses to Modernity in the Diverse States of Southeast Asia and Korea, 1750-1900* (HoundsmilllNew York: MacMillan, 1997); Siegel, *Fetish,* 134; Pamela Pattynama, 'Beweging op het achtererf. Dagelijks leven in de jaren twintig', in: Wim Willems et. al. eds., *Uit Indie geboren. Vier eeuwen familiegeschiedenis* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1997) 117-131; Noer, *Modernist Muslim Movement;* chapter 4 and chapter 6.

75 Gouda, *Dutch Culture,* 75-II7; Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement.*

76 Kumari Jayawardena, *The White Woman's Other Burden: Western Women and South Asia During British Rule* (New York: Routledge, 1995); H.A.O. de Tollenaere, *The Politics of Divine Wisdom. Theosophy and Labour, National and Women's Movements I87S-I947* (Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, 1996). British women who had learned from their Irish struggles for Home Rule and who idealised Hinduism, belonged to this group of British critical colonialists. The difference between British and Dutch women may thus be due to an older British tradition of anti-colonialism and left-wing revolutionary politics. It may also be related to the absence of a dominant Hinduism in the Netherlands Indies. Moreover, there is a time difference. British female support of nationalism was particularly strong in the early twentieth century. The progressiveness of Theosophy waned both in India and Indonesia in the 1920S and 1930S, the decades of a more explicit Indonesian nationalism.

77 Coté, joost, translation and ed., *On Feminism and Nationalism. Kartinis Letters to Stella Zeehandelaar, I899-I90J* (Clayton: Monash University, 1995) 1.

78 joost Coté, 'Tirto Adhi Soerjo and the Narration of Indonesian Modernity, 1909-1912: An Introduction to Two Stories', *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs,* 32, no. 2 (I998) I-43·

79 Sriati Mangoenkoesoemo, 'De Javaansche vrouw', in: Harry Poeze and Henk Schulte Nordholt eds., *De roep om Merdeka. Indonesische vrijheidslievende teksten uit de twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam/Den Haag: Mets/rcovta, 1995) 41-44.

80 O.R., 'De Hedendaagsche Javaansche Vrouw', *De Locomotief* 22-9-1934.

81 *Pasoendan Istri,* the Sundanese women's organisation, the Indonesian student movement *Indonesia Muda* (New Indonesia), and the Indonesian nationalist education reformer Ki Hadjar Dewantoro agreed on this gender program, *Overzicht van de Inheemsche en Chineesch-Maleisische Pers (IPO)* 1937. no. 51, 18-12-1937, 832; 1938, no. 2; 8-1-1938, 26; 1938, no. 43, 22-10-1938, 712-713.

82 To paraphrase Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments, 6.*

83 About these ideals amongst others Razoux-Schultz-Metzer in chapter 5; Soewarsih Djojopoespiro, 'De Indonesische vrouw van morgen', *Kritiek en Opbouw,* I, 9 (IS-6-1938) 145-147. The latter was the younger sister of Soewarni Pringgodigdo, chair of the most feminist organisation *Isteri Sedar.* As Chatterjee has outlined, images of 'motherhood' made it sexually safe for women to act in the public realm. Chatterjee, *Nation and its Fragments,13I.*

84 Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction, The Unfinished Business of Colonial Modernities', in: Antoinette Burton ed., *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities* (LondonlNew York: Routledge, 1999) 1-16,esp. 12.

85 Benedict R.O.G. Anderson, *Language and Power. Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1990) *95.*

86 Charles Tilly ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (PrincetonlNew Jersey: Princeton University Press, *1975);* Benedicr Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London /New York: Verso, 199I. First imprint 1983).

87 See for an analysis of the ambivalences of the colonial state Van Doom, *De laatste eeuw van Indic. 51-79.*

88 To cite Homi Bhabha's famous phrase about the Western gaze of the 'mimic' colonised. Homi K. Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Man. The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', in: Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London-lNew York: Routledge, 1994) *85-92.*

89 Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments, 10.*

90 E.].M. Heijs, *Van vreemdeling tot Nederlander. De verlening van het Nederlanderschap aan vreemdelingen (I8IJ-I992)* (Nijmegen: Ph.D. Catholic University Nijmegen, *1995) 61-75.*

91 Peter van der Veer,'The Moral State, Religion, Nation and Empire in Victorian Britain and British India', in: Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann eds., *Nation and Religion. Perspectives on Asia and Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999) 15-43, esp.18-20, 39·

92 For recent research on the contest around the freedom of speech see Mirjam Maters, *Van zacbte wenk tot harde hand Persvrijbeid en persbreidel in Nederlands-Indie, I906-I942* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1998).

93 Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments, 3-13.*

94 For the complicated patterns of public and private for women and women's issues in colonial modernity in India see also Mrinalini Sinha, 'The Lineage of the 'Indian' Modern. Rhetoric, Agency and the Sarda Act in Late Colonial India', in: Antoinette Burton ed, *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities* (LondonlNew York: Routledge, 1999) 207-221.

11 Female Labour in Twentieth-Century Colonial Java: European Notions - Indonesian Practices

INTRODUCTION

The apostle Peter had already described women as the 'weaker vessel' in his Biblical letters (I Peter 3:7). His image of women as the weaker sex was of considerable influence on nineteenth-century labour legislation with regard to women in Europe. For its own sake this 'weaker vessel' was not allowed to work outside the home or only to a limited extent. This would not only be for the women's own well-being, but also for that of their families. Christian and socialist ideas of protecting the weak fitted in remarkably well with the ideology of the family, as it developed in the industrialised world of the nineteenth century.

To what extent were these Western notions exported when in the twentieth century the first social legislation was introduced in the Netherlands Indies? Were these ideas responsible for the government's interference with female labour here too, or did the Europeans, on crossing the equator, discard their own norms and values, using the tropics as a pretext for a change in their opinions? Both approaches were possible, as the official debates on female night labour of the mid-twenties illustrated. Two opinions emerged. First, a woman's place was in the home and she should seek employment only in dire (economic) circumstances. The second opinion held that – contrary to women in the Western world - Indonesian women were not bound to their home. They used to work not out of economic necessity, but in accordance with Javanese cultural patterns, or *adat.*

How did these gender perceptions influence the first colonial sociallegislation for women? What was their origin and how did they relate to women's work practices in rural Java? Answers to these questions can offer a clarifying view of colonial knowledge production about women from the Indonesian peasant class (*tani*) and of gender, class and race relations in the Indies. Official colonial reports on Indonesian rural labour in the 1920s and 1930s may serve as contrary evidence as to what extent these European notions corresponded to Indonesian 'realities',

EUROPEAN NOTIONS

In 1925 the proto-parliament of the Netherlands Indies, the People's Council, discussed a bill on the abolition, or rather regulation of women's night labour in industry. The council voiced two opinions. At the debates in the all-male People's Council' those who spoke in favour of the measure had undeniably been inspired by opinions on the subject voiced earlier in the Netherlands. They shared the views of the abolitionists of female night labour expressed in 1889.' The members, on the other hand, who opposed the bill, were guided by their experiences in the colony.

According to the first Western' viewpoint - held not only by Europeans, but also by progressive Indonesian members of the People's Council - Indonesian women belonged to the weaker sex, like Dutch women. When the government acts in the area of social legislation, it stands to reason that it will first of all try to protect the physically and economically weaker categories of workers - women and children', read the explanatory memorandum} Night labour was, after all, more exhausting than day labour, and women were supposedly more sensitive than men to the hardships of night labour.

Moreover, a woman's place was supposed to be with her family, whether in the Indies or in Europe. Her night labour was believed to lead to the neglect of her husband and children, and of babies in particular. Therefore, night labour had to be restricted not only for the woman's own sake, but for the benefit of 'future generations'. The socialist].E. Stokvis, member of the Indies Social Democratic Party *(Indische Sociaal-Democratische Party)* pointed out that social legislation had been necessary everywhere in order to preserve the family. Achmad Djajadiningrat, regent of Batavia and member of the Netherlands Indies Liberal Alliance *(Nederlandsch-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond),* also put the family first. After all, the aim of social legislation was not only to improve labour conditions and wages, but also to raise the standard of family life, to improve moral and spiritual well-being, housing and other aspects of workers' lives. Married women were thus expected to work only out of economic necessity.' Djajadiningrat cited the prosperous Preanger region as an example: 'If the economic conditions are favourable, here too the men will let the women work as little as possible, because they, too, like pretty hands and a pretry complexion'.5 This line of reasoning had been heard before, in the 1889 discussions in the Netherlands. Western views of women prevailed among the supporters of abolition. The woman was the weaker sex, her place was in the home and she would seek outside employment only if forced to by necessity.

The arguments of the anti-abolition forces were quite different. These opponents were found mostly among employers in the large agricultural industries such as the Java Sugar Employers Federation *(Java Suiker Werkgeversbond* or JSWB) and the Netherlands Indies Employers Association *(Indische Ondernemersbondt."* Their arguments hardly concealed their self interests. Female night labour was particularly common in the sugar, tea, and coffee factories. In general, a considerable portion of the labour force in European agriculture was made up of women: 25 percent on sugar estates and 45 percent on the remaining European estates in Java, not including the category of casual coolies."

Opponents stressed the completely different nature of Eastern society and Eastern women, - an essentialising 'Orientalist' position." According to their views female night labour in Java was, 'as in every Eastern society, considered in principle to be on a par with that of male labour and a perfectly natural institution? The East differed from the West, where women were regarded as unsuited or not destined for manual labour by nature. According to the representative of the Indies Employers Association, the 'native man' in the Netherlands Indies could not adequately provide for his family. This brought in the economic argument after all. But more importantly, Indonesian men also lacked the 'serious desire' to do so. Therefore, husband, wife and children each had to provide for themselves.[10] Or, in the words of another European employers' spokesman: female labour was not an economic necessity, but *'ada!',* a traditional cultural pattern. For that reason, it was argued, the government should refrain from interfering.[11]

Hence, according to these 'Orientalising' conservatives, Eastern women were fundamentally different from their Western counterparts. Speaking from their own class position and ill-informed about European labour patterns, they seemed to forget that European women of other classes had been working for ages as well." They, moreover, overlooked the Western idea of labour as an adaptable and changeable economic phenomenon. Talking about female rural labour in terms of nature (a 'perfectly natural institution'), they essentialised it and rendered it untouchable. Those who were active in the economy thus - ironically - appealed to cultural traditions, whereas the more idealistic members of the People's Council chose the economy as a starting point. This respect for *adat* and nature suited the employers' self-interests extremely well, as it served to continue and legitimise the existing situation.

The core of the antithesis between the two notions of female gender was the view of the role and place of Javanese peasant women inside and outside the family. This determined the wide range of opinions regarding their labour. Yet,

it should be noted that this discourse on gender roles was constructed in close connection with economic policies. Besides its social and psychological functions, labour always serves economic purposes: to provide for a living, whether in a strict or broader sense." The question therefore, was not whether Javanese women used to be or should be at home, as argued during the People's Council's debates, but firstly, what the place of female labour was within the Javanese (and colonial) rural economy, and secondly, if and to what extent *adat* determined a gender division of rural labour. The most likely answer as to whether Javanese peasant women worked out of economic necessity or because of *adat,* is a combination of the two. Female labour in agrarian Java – where the standard of living was low - was born of economic necessity and had developed into a 'perfectly natural institution', expressed and legitimised in images and rituals. Before testing this hypothesis with figures from the period between the two World Wars, it is relevant to look more closely at the origins of the debates on this modern social policy in a colonial context and to analyse to what extent these Western and Orientalist notions determined the resulting legislation.

FEMALE NIGHT LABOUR IN THE NETHERLANDS INDIES

The views on female night labour mentioned above turned out to be only partially relevant to the ultimate legislation that was adopted. Although the Western view had formed the stimulus for the bill, it was not consistently applied. The government of the Netherlands Indies proved susceptible to economic 'realities', which left the 'Orientalists' plenty of room to move. This is apparent both in the way in which the bill was adopted and from the content itself

The proposal was the first public action taken by the newly founded Labour Office *(Kantoor van Arbeid)* of the Department of Justice. It was to prepare social legislation and usher it through the People's Council. With this decree of r925, the Netherlands Indies were certainly not as advanced as other colonies. The British colonial government of India had already taken a similar measure in 1891." Not until 1918 did a social policy for workers attract any attention in the Indies. Governor-General, JP. van Limburg Stirurn ('9,6-'92') was not insensitive to the demands of the nationalist movement in this matter. After the first attempts to design social legislation had failed because of lack of data, the Labour Office had been given the task of collecting the missing information in 1921.

The bill was also the result of international pressure. In '922 the Netherlands had signed one of the first conventions of the International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva concerning the prohibition of child labour and female night

labour in industry, in which colonies were included but also acknowledged as exceptional cases. A subsequent request from Geneva for information on the subject from the Netherlands and its colonies stimulated the process of legislation in the Indies.

The bill was drafted after, and under the influence of, a survey carried out among government officials and employers' federations. As the head of the Labour Office/*Kantoor van Arbeid* had been pessimistic about the possibilities of implementing the ILO treaty, he had first asked for their opinions.[5] The European and Indonesian trade unions were not consulted and neither were the Indonesian women's organisations. The government did not seek the latter's advice in this matter, probably because they represented the educated female elite who were not very connected to the women of the lowest classes working in the sugar industry for instance. Before the early '930S, these women's organisations were not deeply interested in socio-economic problems of these women.'[6] Only the magazine *Sedio Tomo* would dedicate an article to the new legislation. The anonymous male writer applauded it as important for both women and unemployed men, partly because it would prevent women from going out at night and indulging in 'lascivious pastimes' instead of work.'[7] The subject remained a colonial topic, reaching Indonesians who were members of the People's Council only. It attracted little attention outside this assembly.

The result of the survey showed that female night labour was particularly common at harvest time in the sugar, cassava, fibre and (palm) oil industries, in salt production in Madura, and less frequently (in cases of an abundant harvest) in the coffee and tea factories."[8] In the sugar industry in particular, there were no men to be found for certain jobs in certain regions. Hence, the Java Sugar Employers Federation and the Indies Employers Association considered female night labour indispensable. Government officials were on the whole more positive about the possibilities of abolishing night labour. No figures were given to support the arguments, however; and jobs in the sugar industry in which women were indispensable were not mentioned by name. All in all, the survey could not claim to be very thorough.'[9]

But these surveys were used in drafting the legislation. Female labour in closed workspaces (as the bill defined 'industry) was forbidden from 10 P.M. until 5 A.M. An exception was made for all industries in which female labour was common on a large scale such as the sugar factories during the grinding period, the fibre, cassava flour and palm oil factories, and the government salt factories in Madura. The managers of these factories, however, were obliged quarterly to provide the Labour Office (KvA) with details of working hours and wages when harvest time was over. Moreover, by issuing special licences,

the Labour Office could allow female night labour during certain periods in the tea, coffee and fireworks factories, in batik workshops and other unspecified industries.:"

Thus, the bill was a compromise between Western opinions about a woman's place and the economic demands of employers, with large concessions to the latter who justified their needs for female labour by referring to *adat.* The night was actually designated as four hours shorter here than in Europe. All industries which already used female night labour were exempted from the measure in advance or by means of a special licence. As had earlier been the case in the Netherlands, social legislation had to fit in with, and be adapted to, the demands of industry. Not unjustly, the head of the Labour Office added this comment to his proposal: 'In fact it restricts female labour to such a small degree that opposition is very unlikely'."

Not even in the final version of the decree was it possible to express more consistently the Western principles which had led to the measure after all. When the People's Council dealt with the matter, amendments in that vein (extension of the night by I I/2 hours, restriction of exemption to 60 days) - which had been suggested by the socialist Stokvis - were rejected upon governmental advice. Restriction of the exemption was also strongly opposed by the spokesman of the Java Sugar Employers Federation, because the sugar growing season often lasted more than twice as long as the period proposed, and because it involved some 10,000 women. As they worked in shifts, a ban on night labour would also mean an end to their daytime jobs. The proposal was accepted by the People's Council with only Stokvis opposing. It took effect on March I, 1926.[22] The government abolished female night labour at its own salt factories in Madura, on October I, 1927.

In the events that followed, practice once again proved stronger than legislation; the economy was more influential in diminishing women's night labour than any opinion. The decrease in the number of licences issued towards the end of the 1920S was not a matter of principle, but of practice: new sorting machines in the tea factories diminished the need of female night labour. At the same time, the number of sugar factories using female night labour increased from 117 to 126. This number was not to diminish dramatically until the crisis of the '930S, when many sugar factories closed down: in I936 only 22 out of a total of 37 remaining factories still employed women at night. When the economy in the Indies improved, this number rose back up to 53 out of 80 factories in 1938.23

On the one hand the worldwide economic crisis stimulated a reduction of female night labour in the sugar industry, while on the other hand it also urged

the government to postpone its plans for stricter measures in this respect. In the 1930S there was no money either to replace the permanent dispensation (through licenses), or for a ban on female night labour in the *batik* workshops. The income of the Labour Office had been too drastically reduced to enable the introduction and inspection of these measures.tt

Although Western views of a woman's place were a source of inspiration at the beginning of social legislation in the Netherlands Indies, no further progress was made. Both the Western and the 'Orientalist' school of thought were satisfied with the compromise embodied by the decree. In the crisis-ridden '930S, social policy had to give way to economic reality even more so than in the '920S. The fact that this did not displease the 'Orientalists' seems less important. What was decisive in the end was not this viewpoint but the economy.

THE INDONESIAN PRACTICE: FIGURES FROM THE 1920S AND 1930S

To what extent European notions about women with paid work corroborated with Indonesian reality can be seen from figures produced by surveys of indigenous labour iu the '920S and '930S. As these figures were not published until after the debate on female night labour in the People's Council, the government was able to determine its labour policy, unhampered by a surplus of information. The surveys considered were:

I The analyses of indigenous agriculture in Java by the *Landbouwvoorlichtingsdienst* (Agricultural Information Service);
2 The 1930 census of the Netherlands Indies;
3 The '939-'940 Coolie Budget Survey in Java's, concerning income and expenditure of working-class families on Western estates.

On the basis of this material, and other information if necessary, it is possible to verify whether a large number of women were indeed involved in the production process, and if so, whether this was determined by economic necessity or by indigenous cultural patterns or by a mixture of the two.

ANALYSES OF INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE

In order to gain more insight into the working methods and results of Javanese agriculture, the Agricnltural Information Service *(Landbouwvoorlichtingsdiensti* carried out various studies in the 1920S. Rural activities in a number of villages, mostly in East Java, were observed over several monsoon seasons and years; items such as the number of working hours per product per hectare for

Cutting and transporting rice, no year (Private).

men, women, and children, as well as the remuneration, selling prices, and profits were recorded." These analyses offer documented proof in figures of the important role of women in *sawah* or wet-rice cultivation on flooded fields, as the Europeans had already observed in the nineteenth century," The situation in dry-rice cultivation was similar. On average, 50 to 80 percent of the time spent on the production of rice per hectare was by women (see Appendix I). After all women had the most labour-intensive jobs: planting, weeding and the gathering of the rice ears one by one.

Within rice cultivation, a fairly strict, if not rigid, division of labour according to gender was observed. As mentioned, women did the planting, weeding and harvesting. Men prepared the fields by tilling them with hoes and harrows, and they maintained the irrigation systems and *bibit* fields (young rice plants). There were many variations on this theme: weeding could be a male or a female activity according to the region and the season. Islamic students of a *pesantren* (Islamic school) sometimes agreed to cultivate a piece of land, in order to pay their tutor in crops that they harvested themselves. During the crisis of the 1930s in some regions of West Java, men are said to have taken over the harvesting from women." However, according to the agricultural analyses, on average two thirds of the total working hours in rice cultivation was still performed by women (Appendix. I).

In the cultivation of rice, the gendered division of labour was strongly influenced *byadat,* and particularly by Javanese religious traditions. The adoration of the rice goddess - called Dewi Sri (in Javanese) or Nyi Pohaci (in Sundanese) - demanded female hands and labour-intensive harvesting. Male hands were too 'hot' *(pat/as),* which were believed to put the rice goddess in an unfavourable mood.'? Rice was supposed to have a female soul that should be bound to it. All customs surrounding rice cultivation were geared towards this purpose. Only then could a good harvest and a permanent quality of the rice be guaranteed.[30] The prescribed labour division was thus part of traditional agrarian technology, intended, just like modern techniques, to increase crop production.[31] Thus – in addition to its religious significance - the labour division of labour served an economic purpose.

The gendered division of labour had other economic functions as well: it engaged the largest possible labour force in a labour-intensive cultivation and (re}distributed scarce means within the village community. It also fixed the practical indispensability of women's labour. Before the economic crisis of 1885, Java had suffered more from a shortage than from an abundance of labour. All available hands were used, more so because, due to the different maturing times and varying lengths of its ears, the rice had to be individually cut with the *ani-ani* (rice knife); only particular types of rice could be harvested with a sick-

Sortingpadi, no year (KITLV, Leiden).

le.[32] Moreover, men were often already involved in the harvest by processing the straw and transporting the crop.

Harvesting by women also had another important economic function: the (re)distribution of means. The many women involved in this were rewarded with a share of the crop. This is why harvesting has been called one of the 'welfare institutions' of rural Java)3 This share of the harvest formed a large, if not the largest, part of the family income.> Whether it was earned by the richer women (the *kecukupan,* those who possess just enough) or by the poorer women (the *kekurungan,* those who have too little) is not relevant; in both cases their labour served economic purposes.

In other words, in rice cultivation, religious rules and economic functions went hand-in-hand. In the cultivation of *polowijo* - secondary crops, sowed or planted after the rice had been harvested, and crops on dry land - *adat* played no part. Here the division of labour had only an economic motive. This type of cultivation was less labour-intensive and had no tasks prescribed exclusively for women. Generally, in the planting, weeding, and harvesting of *polowijo,* women were in the minority (see Appendix I). The number of female labourers was also influenced by employment of men elsewhere. Thus the women in the *desa* (village) of Ngujang (Kediri) picked peanuts during the 1927 East monsoon, when men were earning money in the European sugar industry. The harvesting during the West monsoon was done by men.c

So the number of female labourers was only remarkably higher than men's labour in rice cultivation. Even if we combine the average number of hours for female labour for *polowijo* and rice (Appendix I), on average it turns out to equal the number of hours of male labour, varying from 42 percent to 57 percent of the total amount of labour hours. And only in wet-rice cultivation was this pattern of labour culturally defined. But also here economic motives were paramount; *adat* and the economy went hand-in-hand. In the religious precepts all aspects of life were united. It would go too far to ascribe an economic origin to a religious practice on the grounds of its economic function. Yet, we can be certain that the religious practice of the division of labour in rice cultivation supported and maintained certain economic choices of the community concerned.

The division of labour in rice cultivation proved that both the Western and the 'Orientalist' views were correct. Women worked out of economic necessity but their labour was motivated and legitimated by *adat.* At first glance, rice cultivation seemed to support the 'Orientalist' perceptions in particular. And since Orientalist conservatives rarely were thorough investigators, their opinion on women's labour in general was certainly based on their observation of the role

of women in rice cultivation. After all this had long attracted European attention for its colourful beauty and basic food production.

THE CENSUS OF 1930

The census of September/October 1930 did not directly confirm these figures on the important role of women in indigenous agriculture. Only 23 percent of the total work force in Java and Madura actively involved in agriculture were women.[36] The labour in indigenous agriculture was invisible, as the editors of the census implicitly acknowledged.

The census considered professionals only those workers who did their job 'as a rule' and in order to earn or contribute towards a living, either by producing for themselves, or by making money)? Therefore the paddy harvesters, who received a share of the rice, were not regarded to be agricultural workers. The same was true for those women who helped their husbands with agricultural duties. In general, the census takers, young indigenous civil servants, had run into trouble to find out whether married women worked 'as a rule'. Moreover, much of the agricultural work was done by *buruh tani,* the landless rural labourers and casual coolies, who were categorised under the 'insufficiently described professions'. In Java and Madura women made up almost 41 percent of this category. In other words, this figure also concealed much of the agricultural labour done by women)'

Hence, the statistics of the census on female labour were not very reliable. It had also been hard to convince the Indonesian census takers that the work of married women should be regarded as a profession. According to the census editors, in Indonesian society women's incomes were often considered complementary. This statement reveals some of the problems experienced in the collection and interpretation of the data.

Instructions to count married women's labour as a profession had led to uneven results. In several regencies in Central and East Java and in the Principalities of Central Java (Yogyakarta and Surakarta) , the figures for female labour were higher than average. This was due to the fact that here the wives of agricultural labourers and *buruh tani* had been included in the agricultural category)9 Another disadvantage was that information on the kinds of work was published only per province (West, Central and East Java, Yogyakarta and Surakarta), while overall figures were published per regency. This makes it impossible to explain the great differences between the various regencies. Unfortunately, the regency data seem to have disappeared for good, so that the published figures will have to suffice.f" Although there is thus every reason to

read these figures with necessary reservations, it does seem sensible to find out what they can tell us about female labour and the relation of this labour with contemporary colonial gender perceptions.

In Java and Madura, which were combined in the census, women formed a large part of the working force: 43.5 percent (in the Netherlands, never known for its high percentage of women with paid work, the census of 1930 counted only 24 percent)." There appeared to be great regional differences: West Java showed only 22.5 percent women with paid employment, while Surakarta scored the highest percentage, 45.6 percent. Of the total number of women in Java and Madura in 1936 (irrespective of age) 22.7 percent had a profession (in the Netherlands, the figure was 19.2 percent). Once again, the different parts of Java show a variable picture: in West Java 12.9 percent of women had paid emplyoment, while in Surakarta it was 42.1 percent. Even within a regency the figures could vary considerably from district to district: from 6.5 percent (Krawang, West Java) and more than 8 percent (Wonosobo, Central Java, and Lamongan, East Java) to 25.5 percent, 43.8 percent and 57.5 percent (Ciamis in West Java, Kraksaan in Central Java and Grobogan in East Java respectively).

These differences were determined mostly by the percentage of married women with paid employment. Among all women with paid employment, they prevailed everywhere except in West Java (41.9 percent versus Surakarta 65.2 percent). These same regional patterns were visible in other figures: as a proportion of all married women, the group with paid employment was the smallest in West Java (12.4 percent) and the largest in Yogyakarta (56.5 percent) and Surakarta (65.2 percent). The average for Java as a whole was 29.3 percent. Again, there were considerable differences per regency: from 4 percent in Krawang (West Java) to 90.6 percent in Sragen (Surakarta). The percentage of women with paid employment among single women (which included divorcees and widows) showed a more stable pattern, varying from 13.2 percent (West Java) to 25.4 percent (Surakarta). So even here, Surakarta had the highest figures. Again there were considerable differences between regencies for this category of single women: 8.6 percent in Jatinegara (Meester Cornelis, West Java), 33 percent in Klaten (Surakarta).

How to explain the differences between the two extremes of West Java and the Principalities, which apparently continue to the present day?4' Were they economically determined? Was there, in connection with this labour pattern, also a difference between the two areas in perceptions of and ideas about women's labour? Even if the figures of the Principalities regarding women's labour in agricultural sector were more complete than those from West Java,

which might render the extremes more salient, the figures vary so widely in every respect that we can actually speak of a real difference.

The census does not show any direct causes for the differences. In view of the economic factor, one could assume a correlation between population density and female labour. After all, West Java with its 244 inhabitants per square kilometer was among the least densely populated areas of Java, whereas Surakarta with 425 inhabitants per square kilometer was among its most densely populated regions. However, a comparison of the figures per regency disproves this hypothesis. Generally speaking, the regencies with low female labour figures belonged to the less densely populated areas of the region. But they did not belong to the least densely populated areas, whereas regencies with a high percentage of female labour did not necessarily have a high population density, neither per km^2, nor per km^2 of arable land.

However, one might point out the fact that, in general, West Java was more prosperous than the Principalities. According to the Coolie Budget Survey (see below), land ownership in the areas around the agricultural estates in West-Java was, on average, more extensive than in Yogyakarta and Surakarta.f In the feudal Principalities the relationship between *tani* and land had broken up earlier than elsewhere in Java when, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, land was rented to Europeans. The labour surplus this created forced workers to find other sources of income and other kinds of labour outside the agricultural sector. Because the women in this core area of Java had traditionally played an important part in the cultivation of rice, they may have made the transition to other economic sectors more easily to enable them to provide for their families; consequently paid labour for them was perhaps just as much a matter of course as it was for the men.

Women's labour figures were highest in those places where labour was the most diverse, in other words where large numbers of workers worked outside the indigenous agricultural sector." This was the case for men as well as for women. Surakarta indeed had a higher percentage of women employed in the agricultural and trade sectors than West Java. Yogyakarta had a smaller number of women working in the agricultural sector, but a large number of women in trade and industry. Nearly two-thirds of the total number of women with paid work were employed in these two sectors, whereas in West Java this was no more than one-quarter.

The differences in female labour percentages between the regions did indeed seem to have an economic basis, especially in the loosening of the bond between the farmer and his land in the Principalities, and the resulting increase in labour specialisation.o The increase in labour specialisation and the impor-

tant role of women in the labour force may also have been caused by the large number of services required by the Principalities' courts, which demanded specialisation and intensification of labour.[46] To what extent these economic differences were reflected in the different views on female labour in the regions, and to what extent these, in turn, influenced male labour, is difficult to trace on the basis of the material available. As far as I know, there is neither historical nor anthropological information on this subject.

The information produced by the census showed that in some regencies 'typical female professions' had high percentages of female labourers. In Bantul (Yogyakarta) and Panarukan (East Java) this was the *batik* industry; in Trenggalek (East Java), where only a small number of male workers were employed, the bamboo craft created a relatively large number of jobs for women.v In Java and Madura as a whole, some professions were almost completely or to a large extent female: the textile industry (92 percent), woodwork and bamboo craft and the trade in foods and luxuries such as sweets (72 percent), the preparation of those foods and luxuries (68 percent), the mixed retail trade (54 percent), and the clothing industry (SI percentl.f In some regencies in Central and East Java, where the main industry was textiles *(batik),* as much as 99 percent of this work was performed by women. 49

Does this prevalence of 'typical female professions' point towards *adat* as the decisive factor in the gendering of labour divisions? The division of labour between married and single women does not confirm this hypothesis. In the following domains the majority of women were married: in the textile industry (71.4 percent), in woodwork and bamboo craft (65.5 percent), in the preparation of foods and luxuries (67.8 percent), in the trade of these items and in the clothing industry (66.1 percenrj.i" So the 'typical female professions' were dominated by married women. Most of these activities came under the heading of 'home industry'. This kind of work could be more easily combined with looking after the children. Recent anthropological research has shown how Javanese women incorporate various forms of retail trade and the preparation of foods and luxuries into their households, family situations and life cycles." Women, therefore, chose these types of labour for mostly practical reasons.

Apart from these 'female professions', the census figures revealed more regional differences than particular patterns. Thus, there appears to be no connection between the degree in which a regency depended on agriculture, and the percentages of women employed in that sector. In those regencies where more than 70 percent of the working population was employed in indigenous agriculture, women held 7.9 percent to 52.8 percent of all jobs in that sector. The invisible female workers mentioned earlier might have played a part in

this. In sugar and other European estate agriculture there was no correlation between the importance of an industry for a region - as expressed in the percentage of the working population employed in it - and the percentage of women in that industry's work force.[52]

From all this information we may conclude that Javanese women sought employment for economic reasons, i.e., to provide for their family. As with men, the supply of female labour depended on women's income needs, their appreciation of the work offered, as well as the availability of other income generating opportunities. For example, if home produce (the coconut) provided sufficient income, then the indigenous population had no desire to work on European sugar estates.n This explains the great differences in labour patterns for both men and women from regency to regency.

The figures of the '930 census lead to the following conclusions:

r There was no general picture of female labour in Java. Local figures varied too much, especially with regard to married women with paid employment. Therefore, the 'Orientalist' view of female labour as a general behaviour pattern and a 'perfectly natural institution', was, at the very least, a gross generalisation.

2 To a large extent this view was formed by what Europeans had observed in Yogyakarta and Surakarta, where female labour played a very important role. From a historiographic point of view it is interesting to consider to what extent the Principalities determined and distorted the European view of Javanese society in other areas.

3 Although the census can only give us implicit information, it is clear that in the case of female labour, economic motives were more important than *adat.* However, it may be safely assumed that these economic motives had led to a strong 'tradition' of female labour and female professions.

THE COOLIE BUDGET SURVEY IN JAVA '939-'940

For a small portion of all the women with paid employment - the five percent who in that period found work in European estate agriculture - more specific information on labour and wages can be found in the report of the Coolie Budget Survey carried out in Java from '939 to '940. The purpose of this survey, carried out by a special branch of the Central Bureau of Statistics *(Centraal Kantoor voor de Statistiek)* was to establish a minimum standard of living for labourers in Java on which the colonial government was to base its wage policy - after a twenty-year debate on the subject. To this end, the details of labour and wages, income, expenditure and nutrition of 1555 working families

Planting sugar cane for the sugar factory Ketanen in 1916 (KITLV, Leiden),

on twenty estates were recorded daily for thirty days. **In** the survey, three tea, three coffee, six rubber, two tobacco and four sugar estates were involved as well as two forest ranges and for comparison, the same details were collected from 390 *tani* (peasant) families in the surrounding area. As no women were employed in the forest ranges, I shall not discuss the latter. The working-class families were categorised first according to their involvement with the estate - whether they were living on or off the premises - and then according to their jobs. Thus there were families of garden labourers, factory workers, and top labourers *(mandur* and *tukang).54*

In view of the survey's aim, to render a quick budget analysis, the material shows a number of restrictions regarding the data. The twenty estates formed a reasonable representation of the numerical strength of estate agriculture, of which in the 1930S rubber was by far the most important (44 percent), followed by coffee and tea. However, twenty estates out of a total of 1394 in Java alone was a very small sample (less than 1. 5 percent) . The estates were selected in consultation with employers' organisations; therefore, it remains questionable to what extent they were representative. **In** view of the large regional differences in labour patterns, they were certainly not representative of Java as a whole .55

The families that took part in the survey had been selected after consultations with local government officials. In terms of family size and land owner-

ship they belonged to the rural middle class and represented an average standard of living in their region.[56] In the survey only 'ideal type' families were included - those in which husband, wife, children and relatives each contributed to a shared family income. Therefore the figures in the report are by no means representative of female labour on estates as a whole. The figures merely offered a fleeting impression of the women's share in family labour on the estates surveyed.

As the survey covered a period of only 30 days, the figures are not representative of the annual figures, either of the labour or of incomes and expenditures. Moreover, they were influenced by seasonal labour (particularly in the tobacco, coffee, and sugar estates) as well as by the profits of indigenous agriculture, and food prices. In order to level the effect of seasonal labour to some extent, the survey was repeated on three sugar and two tobacco estates during the harvest later in the year. A survey on the coffee estates had already taken place earlier during harvest time.

With regard to incomes, the figures were not entirely complete or reliable. The unreliability applied particularly to families living off the premises.[57] Nor was it possible to determine the true contribution of women to the family income. Only the wages earned on the estate were categorised according to the position of the earner within the family (head of the family, wife of head of the

Bringing in the coffee at the Pidji Ombo estate, Kediri, no year (KITLV, Leiden).

family, female head of the family, children and other relatives). The income earned outside (land ownership, trade, and so on) was noted per family but not specified.

However, for the ultimate purpose of the survey, the details sufficed. A reasonable minimum standard of living - as measured by the consumption of calories and the distribution of expenses over various household budget items (food, clothing, and so on) - was supposed to be between eight and ten guilders, or between ten and fifteen guilders per family per month, depending on the structure of the family, consumption habits and the price-levels in the region. In many cases a 50 percent increase in wages would have been necessary to achieve this minimum.f This was a drastic conclusion, but due to the time of publication of the report - December 31,1941, when the Indies were already officially at war with Japan for some weeks -- the Coolie Budget Survey did not receive the attention it deserved. It could no longer determine future policies anymore.

Despite its deficiencies, the report did provide an impression of female labour on a number of European estates. The survey was the only pre-World War Il study of labour on European estates with several crops, and thanks to the daily recording of data, it could claim to be thorough. The figures are particularly enlightening with regard to families living on the estates, who formed more than one third of the working-class families surveyed.

Female labour on the estates in the survey was most frequent among families living on the premises, who were more than 90 percent dependent on it for their average monthly income. This group earned a higher average income per month than their colleagues living off the premises. In particular, it was women from families of garden labourers and factory workers living on the estates who had paid work: 66 percent and 64 percent (see Appendix III for further details). Yet, among those living on the estate these two categories were also among the worst paid. The better the head of the family was remunerated, the less likely it would be for the women in his family to have paid work on the estate: among top position families living on the estate, female labour was much less frequent, both on the estate (where only 27 percent of all women between 16 and 61 had a job) and off the premises.s?

Families living on the premises were found on tea, coffee, rubber, and tobacco estates. Only on sugar plantations in densely-populated areas were labourers so numerous that estates did not need to house them, which was reflected in the wages. The average monthly income of garden coolie families in sugar cultivation was four guilders, of which less than half was earned on the estate itself These wages were the lowest ones recorded. Here female labour was rare: in the category of garden coolie families, 17.5 percent of all adult

Sorting coffee beans, no year (KITLV, Leiden).

women (i.e., between 16 and 61) worked, and in the category *mandur* and *tukang* 1.5 percent. Only one out of three factories made use of female labour in harvest-time. Family labour on sugar estates, advanced in 1925 as an argument in the People's Council by representatives of the sugar industry, is hardly apparent from the survey.

The percentage of women with paid work was especially high on coffee estates in East Java, where all the labourers (Javanese and Madurese) lived on the premises. Here nearly 80 percent and 95 percent of all available women in the families of garden coolies and factory workers had a job. These estates made intensive use of the workers at their disposal; there was no difference between Javanese and Madurese labour. Wives of heads of the family and female heads of the family earned nearly one third of the average monthly wages paid on coffee estates. As these average monthly estate wages represented 99 percent of the total monthly income, it established the women's monthly income contribution at 33 percent.

Among the families living off the premises, the contribution of female labour was inversely proportional to the average monthly income: the higher the wages, the less female labour on the estate. Of course, this does not reveal anything about the absolute amount of female labour. For instance, on average, garden coolie families living off the premises depended on the estate for only 58

percent of their monthly income; men as well as women were able to earn the remainder elsewhere.

In view of the fact that female labour on estates was especially common among those living on the premises who had few or no other sources of income, and considering the relationship between income and female labour, we can conclude that the reason for women working was an economic one. Again the law of supply and demand was decisive. Moreover, the majority of women with paid work were either wives of breadwinners or female breadwinners, who shared responsibility for their families. Among those living on the estate this number varied between 92 percent and 85 percent; among those living off the premises it varied between 79 percent and 67 percent. This provides even more evidence for the economic argument.

The report also showed how important female labour was for the estates surveyed. In 1933, the Labour Office *(Kantoor van Arbeid)* had already reported that there was as many male as female labour on estates in Java, particularly on the tea estates in West Java, the tobacco estates in Central Java, the coffee estates in East Java and the sugar estates in Central and East Java. The figures of the 1930 census pointed in the same direction. According to these - and quite apart from casual coolies - women represented 25 percent of the labour force on the sugar estates and 45 percent of labourers on the other estates. The

Sorting tobacco leaves on the Gajamprit estate, Surakarta, no year (KITLV, Leiden),

Harvesting tea at the Selokaton estate, Kendal, no year (KITLV, Leiden).

Coolie Budget Survey confirmed these figures except for the tobacco and sugar estates. **In** this respect, it turned out that the estates in the survey were not representative. However, of aJllabourers between ages 16 and 61, 40 percent were women, who mostly came from families of garden and factory workers. In these categories, estates made use of both male and female labour, and women took the opportunity to work. However, their labour hours were less than that of the men: of all hours spent in gardens and factories by men and women, women did not account for 40 percent, but for slightly more than a quarter, 27 percent and 29 percent respectively. Women in top positions of any significance were found only on the coffee estates, where women accounted for 20 percent of all hours spent at that level.

Only in forest ranges, on tea estates and - to a smaller extent - on coffee estates did the report establish a strict gender division of labour. In the forest ranges, female labour was non-existent.'v on the tea estates, picking was done exclusively by women; in the tea and coffee factories, sorting was a purely female job. Elsewhere, a gender division of labour did not exist. In the rubber industry, this relatively new product was tapped by both men and women at equal pay on four of the six estates.?' One estate had exclusively female workers, another employed only male workers. Physical condition, labour supply, and labour costs determined the division oflabour. *Adat* had no influence."

In short, the Coolie Budget Survey in Java of 1939-40 concluded that women made up an important portion of the labour force on European estates. The 'Orientalist' European perceptions of female labour in Java were based on experiences of Europeans on their own estates. However, here too, it was economic factors rather than traditions that determined the presence of women. This corresponded with the conclusions regarding the origin of female and child labour on the estates as found in the official so-called 'Enquiry into the lower rates of prosperity of the native population of Java and Madura of the first decade of the twentieth century *(Onderzoek naar de mindere welvaart der Inlandsche bevolking opJava en Madoera).* It was only in and after the agricultural crisis of 1885 that women and children had been forced to look for work on these estates more than before, and only then had they been received with open arms as cheap and willing labourers[6 J]

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The two colonial views of female labour in Java, which were developed in the People's Council during the 1925 debate on the prohibition or restriction of female night labour, turned out to have very different origins. The perception of female labour as an economic necessity and the view on which it was based – that the married woman's place was with her family – were undeniably modelled on Western values. The discussion in the People's Council was only a weak echo of the stormy debate which had raged in the metropole's press and parliament 35 years earlier.

On the other hand the 'Orientalist' idea of female labour as a 'self-evident' and 'natural' Eastern institution, determined by *adat* and therefore not to be meddled with, was based on superficial observation of certain aspects of Javanese society.This image was influenced and coloured by the important role of women in rice cultivation. As the supplier ofjava's staple food and as colourful Javanese folklore, rice cultivation had always attracted the attention of European writers. In addition, this image was due to the large amount of paid labour by women in the Principalities and the indispensable role of female labourers in European estate agriculture.

The reports consulted confirmed the Western theory of female labour as an economic necessity. Only in rice cultivation was the role of women in the labour process undoubtedly determined by *adat,* but here again economic factors also played their part. However, due to these economic circumstances, the 'homebound housewife' notion which was part of the Western gender role, was unfamiliar to the Indonesian majority. Even in the 1970S in Central Java,

female labour turned out to be a firmly established tradition among the lowest social classes. Neither men nor women considered it right for a married woman to stay at home. Both partners were financially responsible for the family and so they had to work 'as a pair of oxen before the plough'[64] Economic circumstances had, in essence, made a tradition of female labour.

'Orientalists' failed to take into account the deeper reasons for this tradition. They accepted it at face value and ignored its economic origin. The assumption that women paid less attention to their family was also incorrect. The family was the reason for seeking employment in the first place and women adapted their paid work to the life cycle of their children.[65] At a time when European women, in accordance with the accepted views of the day, served their families best by not doing paid work and staying at home, a great majority of Javanese women did just the opposite by seeking employment outside the home. Not working was and still is a phenomenon of prosperity, as acknowledged in present-day debates on female (and child-) labour.

So neither of the European notions fully explained Javanese practices. In both cases they were generalisations of certain aspects of Javanese reality. Precisely because of this limited relationship with reality, these notions lent themselves pre-eminently to legitimisation of European needs and wishes. They were only partly decisive when it came to drafting policies regarding female night labour. At the very most, the Western gender perceptions provided an initial stimulus. However, the government of the Netherlands Indies gave so much precedence to reality that it fulfilled the wishes of the 'Orientalists'.

Western views on the place of women and on female labour were more likely to penetrate Indonesian society through education than through labour legislation. And because education mainly reached the higher social classes, it is in this group that we should look for any influences of colonial ideology concerning womcn.v" During the colonial period this ideology went over the heads of the Indonesian rural working class.

Appendix!

Analyses ofindigenous agriculture. Average number ofhours spent on the **cultivation ofvarious crops per hectare bymen, women and children in** percentagesr'"

	totalhours	*men*	*women*	*children*
Sawah-paddy				
Bogor 1918-19	1714.2	21.2	78.8	
Preanger n.d.	2036	40.3	53.5	6.2
Kertorejo 1925-26	1278	27.5	72.5	
Kertorejo 1926-27	1377.5	24.1	69.9	5.9
Kertorejo 1927-28	1084.2	30.4	64.9	4.7
Kuncung 1925-26				
glanggangan (before sugar)	1202	33.7	66.3	
lanjah (without sugar)	1307.5	33.0	67.0	
dongkelan (after sugar)	1433.5	32.1	67.9	
Kenep 1925-26				
glanggangan	2233.5	43.8	56.2	
dongkelan	1909	50.4	49.6	
Jetis **1926-27**	1540	41.6	52.6	5.8
Jetis **1927-28**	1712	40.3	53.5	6.2
Pasarejo 1927-28				
glanggangan	2268	33.6	66.4	
dongkelan	2254	34.0	66.0	
Sawo 1928-29	1023	33.6	65.9	0.5
Padi-gogo (rice ondryground)				
Ngujang 1926-27	2428	36.0	64.0	
Pulosari 1926-27	1624	31.3	63.6	5.1
Padi-gadu				
(2nd riceharvest from sawah ineastmonsoon)				
Kuncung 1926	1225	26.8	65.8	7.4
Pasare]o **1928**	2482	33.5	66.5	
Polowijo (here only secondary crops)				
Kertorejo 1927	462	76.6	18.1	5.3
Kertorejo 1928	476	56.9	33.8	9.3
Jetis 1927	564	62.4	13.5	24.1
Jetis **1928**	699	56.6	16.9	26.5
Corn				
Kuncung 1926 after rice	305	79.7	9.3	11.0
Kuncung 1926 after sugar	336.5	80.1	13.7	6.2
Kuncung 1926 after polowijo	298	82.6	7.7	9.7

	totalhours	men	women	children
Peanuts				
Kuncung 1926 1st harvest	338.5	91.8	4.1	4.1
Kuncung 1926 2nd harvest	300	84.8	2.0	13.2
Ngujang 1926-27				
after indigenous sugar	900	50.9	39.2	9.9
notafter indigenous sugar	936	75.5	20.1	4.4
Ngujang 1927	1104	38.3	36.4	25.3
Indigenous sugar				
Ngujang 1926-27	947	100.0		
Pulosari 1926-27	861	98.5	0.5	1.0
Paddy andpolowijo				
Kertorejo 1926-27 and 1927	1839.5	37.3	56.9	5.8
Kertorejo 1927-28 and 1928	1560.3	38.5	55.4	6.1
Jetle 1926-27 and 1927	2104	47.2	42.1	10.7
Jetis 1927-28 and 1928	2420	45.0	42.9	12.1
Paddy andcorn				
Kuncung 1926-26 and 1926	1507.5	43.0	54.8	2.2

The figures vary locally because the number of worked hours depended on, among other things, the fertility of the soil, the water supply, previously planted crops, the abundance of the harvest and the skills of the labourers. It is important to note that the limited number of surveys and the nature of the figures (an average) rules out their use as absolutes. The figures have been calculated only to indicate a trend. Where figures on child labour are not given, the figures for men or women include childrcn.P? In some statistics (those concerning Bogor and the Preanger district) the hours for piling up and drying rice have been listed separately; other statistics stop at the harvest. It is possible that the piling up and drying of rice was tacitly included here; if so, this would also explain the activities of men mentioned under harvesting. The total number of hours of labour per hectare include the following activities: ploughing, harrowing, filling the ditches when planting rice after sugar, preparing the small dykes, sowing, tending young rice plants *(bibit),* planting, weeding, additional planting, and harvesting. The hours of guarding - important for *padi-gogo, padi-gadu* and peanuts – have not been calculated. As it was the men who drove the cartle?" their hours and those of the teams of oxen (listed separately in the analyses) **have been combined here. For his calculation oflabour hours in rice-cultivation,** W.L. Collier used the same sources. Because he excluded the hours spent with teams of oxen, he arrived at a higher percentage of female labour than I found here."

Appendix!!

'930 Census figures concerning labour of indigenous women in Java and Madura

	West Java	*Central Java*	*Yogya-karta*	*Sura-karta*	*East Java*	*Java Madura*	*Nether-lands*[72]
%working population of total population[73]	19.1	36.1	41.5	47.0	36.5	35.3	40.1
%working women of total female population"	11.9	14.9	35.9	41.1	13.7	11.7	19.1
%working men of total male populattrm"	46.4	48.0	49.4	51.9	49.8	48.5	61.3
%working women of total working populanorr"	11.5	35.1	43.3	45.5	33.4	31.4	14.1
%married women of total working women"	41.9	60.5	64.7	65.1	51.8	55.5	n.a.
%married working women of total married women"	11.4	34.6	56.5	65.1	19.5	19.3	n.a.
%single working women of total single women[79]	13.1	17.4	11.5	15.4	19.5	17.7	n.a.
%women in European sugar of total number of native labourers there[80]	11.1	15.4	18.9	15.9	15.9	14.8	
%women in other Eur. estates of total native labourers there"	39.0	43.7	11.7	46.5	49.6	44.5	
%women in insufficient-ly described jobs of total number of native labourers there[82]	17.7	40.4	49.4	77.9	44.1	40.8	

Professions most commonly practised by women

	West Java	*Central Java*	*Yoyya-karta*	*Sura-karta*	*East Java*	*Java Madura*	*Nether-lands*[72]
% of total number of working women in[83]							
indigenous agriculture	39.2	40.7	21.4	43.8	37.5	38.4	
foreign estates	9.4	2.4	4.4	8.7	9.0	6.8	
in sugar[84]	0.4	1.7	4.3	3.9	4.0	2.7	
in other crops[85]	9.0	0.7	0.1	4.8	5.0	4.1	
industry	24.2	27.4	46.3	20.7	18.3	23.8	
trade	4.7	13.3	16.3	10.4	14.6	12.3	
domestic service	6.0	3.2	3.0	2.6	4.1	3.9	
insufficiently described jobs (casual coolies)	14.7	11.3	4.6	12.2	13.3	12.3	
others	1.5	1.7	3.7	1.6	3.2	2.5	

Appendix III

Figures from the Coolie Budget Survey in Java '939-'940 per estate - product

Average monthly income per family according to category of working-class families in cents[86]

	tea	*coffee*	*rubber*	*tobacco*	*sugar*	*average total*
Living on the estates						
garden labourers	930	836	896	1006		881
factory workers	1164	1141	1057			1158
top labourers	1848	1910	1034	3677		1334
Living off the premises						
garden labourers	693		556	866	401	513
factory workers			835	783	833	819
top labourers	3677		886	1335	1916	1798
rent families	894	798	601	997	603	677

Share of estate wages in total family income per month, in percentages[87]

	tea	*coffee*	*rubber*	*tobacco*	*sugar*	*average total*
Living on the estates						
garden labourers	91	99	91	86		91
factory workers	96	99	93			96
top labourers	87	91	90	58		79
Living off the premises						
garden labourers	73		69	71	44	58
factory workers			91	57	75	77
top labourers			88	87	85	87

Average wages earned on the estate by female heads of the family or wives of heads of the family, in percentages of the monthly estate-earned income per family[88]

	tea	*coffee*	*rubber*	*tobacco*	*sugar*	*average total*
Living on the estates						
garden labourers	31	31	31	9		18
factory workers	17	19	14			11
top labourers	7	17	8	1		8
Living off the premises						
garden labourers	31		19	3	6	13
factory workers			34		7	8
top labourers			3		1	1

Percentage of women working on the estate out of the total number of women between 16 and 61 in the families surveyed [89]

	tea	coffee	rubber	tobacco	sugar	average total
living on the estates						
garden labourers	78.2	79.2	64.5	50.0		65.6
factory workers	64.7	95.5	33.3			64.8
top labourers	32.3	52.2	19.4	17.1		27.1
Living off the premises						
garden labourers	53.2		35.9	17.6	17.5	22.0
factory workers			54.5		9.8	9.9
top labourers			6.6		1.5	1.3

Percentage of female breadwinners or wives of breadwinners, earning an income on the estate, out of the total number of women between 16 and 61 earning an income [90]

	tea	coffee	rubber	tobacco	sugar	average total
living on the estates						
garden labourers	83.7	93.3	94.0	82.4		91.9
factory workers	100.0	88.1	93.3		92.4	
top labourers	70.0	88.0	83.3	55.6		84.9
living off the premises						
garden labourers	86.8		65.6	75.0	66.0	70.6
factory workers			100.0		69.2	78.9
top labourers			100.0		50.0	66.6

Number of female wage earners between 16 and 61 out of all estates labourers of that age group, in percentages

	tea	coffee	rubber	tobacco	sugar	average total
living on the estate						
garden labourers	50.6	45.6	40.8	33.3		42.7
factory workers	36.6	52.5	28.3			40.9
top labourers	27.8	40.0	16.7	14.0		26.3
living off the premises						
garden labourers	45.8		37.2	34.3	18.3	30.3
factory workers			42.9		1.2	13.0
top labourers			7.7		14.3	8.1

Average number of hours spent in gardens, factories and top labour by men, women, adolescents (12-16 years old) and children, in percentages of all labour hours[91]

	tea	*coffee*	*rubber*	*tobacco*	*sugar*	*average total*
Garden jobs						
men	71.6	49.7	56.2	76.4	67.0	60.3
women	10.5	33.8	33.5	10.2	15.9	27.0
adolescents	10.6	8.0	6.5	2.5	10.9	7.2
children	7.3	8.5	3.8	10.9	6.2	5.5
Factory jobs						
men	60.5	44.5	53.8	65.2	90.0	65.8
women	35.4	50.9	38.0	25.3	6.5	29.1
adolescents	4.1	3.7	6.6	6.1	2.4	4.1
children		0.9	1.6	3.4	0.5	1.0
Top labour						
men	97.5	79.7	100.0	98.1	100.0	96.7
women	2.5	20.3		1.9		3.3
adolescents						
children						

Notes

The first female member of the People's Council was not appointed until 1935, see chapter 5. The bill included the prohibition or regulation of both children's and female night labour. Here I focus only on the part concerning women.

2 J. Blok et al. eds., *Vrouwen, kiesrecht en arbeid in Nederland I889-I9I9* (Groningen: Stichting ter bevordering van de studie in de geschiedenis in Nederland (SSGN), 1977) 199-200.

3 *Handelingen van den Volksraad, I92S.* Mdeling Il, onderwerp 6, stuk 3 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1925) 3.

4 *Handelingen van den Volksraad I925. Notulen der vergadering* (Batavia: Landsdrukkeri], 1925) 1062, 1066, 1083.

5 *Handelingen Volksraad I92S, 1063.*

6 *Handelingen Volksraad I92S.* Mde1ing Il, onderwerp 6, stuk 3, 5-6.

7 *Volkstelling van Nederlandsch-Indie I9Jo. IlL Oost-Java* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1934) 208.

8 Said, Edward W., *Orientalism* (jrd imprint; London and Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987 [First imprint 1978]). It might be maintained that the more Western view held elements of Orientalism as well; yet in view of the essentialising perceptions of the conservatives, I use the term specifically for this group.

9 *Handelingen Volksraad Notulen der vergadering I92S,* II3.

10 Indies Employers Association *(/ndische Ondernemershond)* to Head Labour Office *(Kantoor van Arbeid),* II-4-1924, *no.1821* 25, Archive Ministry of the Colonies (Co1.), 2.10.54, file 837, Algemeen Rijksarchief (ARA), The Hague.

11 *Handelingen Volksraad I92S,* 1087.

12 Louise A. Tilly and jean W. Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978).

13 E. Sullerot, *Geschiedenis en sociologievan de orouuxnarbeid* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1976) 361-2.

14 Female night labour in industry was abolished in the Netherlands in 1889 and prohibited again in 1919. In Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles it did not exist in the 1920S. See Co1., 2.10.54, file 837-

15 The following bodies were consulted: heads of departments and of the provincial government, the Netherlands Indies Employers Association, the Java Sugar Employers Federation, the Netherlands Indies Agricultural Syndicate, the General Society of Rubber Planters on the East Coast of Sumatra, the Deli Planters Society, the Agricultural Society of the Principalities. See *Handelingen Volksraad, I925.* Afdeling **11,** onderwerp 6, stuk 3, 3·

16 The trade unions which also had women among their active members, did not show any interest when the People's Council debated the degree. *Handelingen Volksraad I92S, 1067;* Ph. Levert, *Inheemsche arbeid in de [aoa-suiierindustrie* (Wageningen: Veenman, 1934) 120; Cora Vreede-de Stuers, *L emancipation de laftmme indonesienne* (Paris, The Hague: Mouton, 1959) 67,72.

17 *Overzicht van de Inlandsche en Maleisch-Chineesche Pers* (IPO; Batavia: Bureau voor de Volkslectuur, 1925) 385-

18 In the oil industry, women sorted the *kacang* (peanuts); in the fibre industry they assisted in operating the machines, and at harvest time they sorted the fibres. In the cassava industry they carried out only light duties, comparable to kitchen work. In the sugar factories, women worked in shifts, doing the heavy and responsible work of operating the centrifugal machines and sometimes helping to fill the bags. Head Labour Office (KvA) to Governor-General, q-I-1925 with appendices, mailreport 182/25, Col., 2.10.54, file 837.

19 Head Labour Office (KvA) to Governor General, q-I-1925, mailreport 182/25 **in** Col., 2.10·54, no. 837.

20 *Handelingen Volksraad, I925,* Mdeling Il, onderwerp 6, stuk 3, 9.

21 *Handelingen Volksraad, I925,* Afdeling Il, onderwerp 6, stuk 3,6.

22 *Handelingen Volksraad I92S, 1022.*

23 Head Labour Office (KvA) to Governor General, IJ-4-1931, no. 543b/31, Col., 2.10.54, file *840. Zestiende Verslag van de Arbeidsinspectie* (Batavia: Kantoor van Arbeid, 1937) 133-134; *Zeoentiende Verslag van de Arbeidsinspectie* (Batavia: Kantoor van Arbeid, 1939) 178-179.

24 P.de Kat Angelino, *Rapport betrefftnde eenegehouden enquete, naar de arbeidstoestanden op Java en Madoera, Ill, Oost-jaoa* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1931) 122; Head Labour Office to Governor General, 13-4-1931, mailreport *543b/31,* Col., 2.10.54, file 840.

25 *De levenswijze van de arbeiders in de cultures en van de tanis op Java in I9J9-I940. Eindrapport van de koeliebudgetcommissie* (4 vols.; Batavia: Koeliebudgetcommissie, 1941).

26 See the source material in Appendix 1.

27 P. Boomgaard, 'Female Labour and Population Growth in Nineteenth/Century Java', *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs* 15-2 (1981) 9-10.

28 G.H. van der Kolff, *The Historical Development oJthe Labour Relationships in a Remote Corner of Java as They Apply to the Cultivation of Rice* (Batavia: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1936) 17; 'Landbouw-econornisch verslag ae kwartaal 1932', *Economiscb Weekblad voor Nederlandsch-Indie* (bijlage 2 september 1932) 11.

29 Van der Kolff, *Historical Development, 11-13.*

30 G. van der Weijden, *Indonesische Reisrituale* (Basel: Geographisch-Ethnologischen Cesellschafr/Museum für Volkerkunde, Basler Beitrage zur Ethnologie 20, 1981) 218-230.

31 R Smith Kipp, 'Karo Batak Rice Rituals Then and Now', in: R. Carle ed., *Cultures and Societies of North Sumatra; Proceedings of the International Symposium* (Berlin: Reimer, '986) 253-273.

32 W.L. Collier, Gunawan Wiradi and Soentoro, 'Recent Changes in Rice Harvesting Methods; Some Serious Social Implications', *Bulletin oJ1ndonesian Economic Studies 9-2* (1973) J6.

33 W.L. Collier and Soentoro, 'Rural Development and the Decline ofTraditional Welfare Institutions in Java'. Paper Presented at the Western Economic Associations' Conference (Honolulu 1978).

34 G.].A. Terra and Soeparma Satiadiredja, 'De beteekenis van de nijverheid in de desa's Kepedek, Babadsari, Triwarno en Toendoenseto (Koetowinangoen)', *Landbouw* 15 (1939) 164.

35 F. van Gogh and E. de Vries, 'Arbeidsontleding van de tegalancultuur in Zuid-Kediri', *Landbouw* 6 (19Jo-JI) 94.

J6 *Volkstelling "930· IlI,9.*

J7 *Volkstelling "930. III,84·*

J8 *Volkstelling "930. I,* 8J-6; *Ill, 85-86.*

J9 *Volkstelling "930·Ill, 84-86.*

40 Not all the information collected was published. Thus the figures concerning secondary jobs - which would allow us to gain some insight into Java's fluid labour-structure - were omitted, as were the figures on the different work categories within the various professional groups. I could not find these in any archives **in** the Netherlands or in Indonesia.

41 *Volkstelling I9Jo.* 111, 87. The working population had not been divided into age cohorts, so that child labour had been included **in** the figures. Therefore, comparison with the Netherlands, where child labour under the age of 14 had been forbidden, is not entirely justified.

42 Even in 1981 these regional differences turned out to exist, as the following figures from 1983 attest:

	Jakarta	*West Java*	*Central Java*	*Yogyakarta*	*East Java*	*Java*
% women with paid work out of total working population	28.9	33.5	41.4	47	39.6	37.7
% women with paid work out of total female population	26.9	36.4	50.3	59.9	44.6	43.1

See *Profil statistik ibu dan anak di Indonesia 198J* (Jakarta: Biro Pusat Statistik, 1983) 107.

43 L.H. Huizenga, *Het koeliebudgetonderzoek op Java in 19J9-1940* (Wageningen: VADA, 195B) 258.

44 *Volhle/ling 1930. 11,* 86, 88.

45 C.Ch. van den Haspel, *Overwicht in overleg. Hervormingen van justitie, grondgebruik en bestuur in de Vorstenlanden 188o-19Jo* (Dordrecht-Cinnaminson: Foris, 1985) 5-16.

46 Personal communication prof dr. G-J. Resink 1985.

47 *Volhte/ling 1930· 11,* 86, 88, *Volhtelling 1930. III,* 86, *90.*

48 *Volhtelling 1930. II, 94.*

49 *Volkstelling 19Jo. Il,* 92; *Volkstelling 19JO. Ill, 96.*

50 *Volkstelling 19Jo. III, 94.*

51 N. L. Peluso, *Occupational Mobility and the Economic Role Of Rural Women. A Case Study Of Women Working Outside Agriculture in Two Villages in Sleman, Yogyakarta* (Yogyakarta: Population Studies Center Gadjah Mada University, 1982) 29.

52 *Volkstelling 19Jo. I,* 87, 88, *Volkstelling 19Jo. Il,* 91, 92, *Volkstelling 19Jo. Ill, 90.*

53 E. de Vries, 'Boekbespreking' [Ph. Levert, Inheemsche arbeid in de Java- suikerindustrie], *Landbouw* 9 ('933-34) 569.

54 Huizenga, *Koeliebudgetonderzoek, 26-33.*

55 *Ibidem,* 23-26.

56 *Ibidem, 30·*

57 *Ibidem,* 257.

58 *Ibidem, 242.*

59 Outside the estates, women from this class earned no more than that part of the wages not earned on the estate, which on tea, coffee and rubber estates was about 10%. This does not apply to women on tobacco estates, who were able to contribute more than 40% of the family income earned outside the estate (Appendix Ill).

60 *Levenswijze arbeiders II,* 18-26.

61 *Levenswijze arbeiders 11, 136.*

62 Huizenga, *Koeliebudgetonderzoek, 263.*

63 *Onderzoek naar de mindere welvaart der Inlandsche bevolking op Java en Madoera. VId Overzicht van de uitkomsten der gewestelijke onderzoekingen naar den niet-Inlandscben*

handel en nijverheid en de daaruit gemaakte gevolgtrekkingen (5 vcls.; Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1908-1912) IV, 16-17.

64 V.J. Hull, *A Woman's Place... Social Class Variations in Women's Work Patterns in a]avanese Village* (Yogyakarta: Population Studies Center Gadjah Mada University, 1979) 5.

65 Peluso, *Occupational Mobility, 29.*

66 See chapters 5 and 6.

67 Figures based on L. Koch, *Bijdrage tot de ontleding van het Inlandsch landbouwbedriJf* (Batavia: Landbouwvoorlichtingsdienst. Mededeelingen 3, 1919) 5; A.M.P.A. Scheltema, *De ontleding van het Inlandscb landbouwbedriJf(Batavia:* Landbouwvoorlichtingsdienst. Mededeelingen 6, 1923) 28; G.J. Vink, Poertjadja Gadroen and Goenoeng Iskander, 'Twee partieele bedrijfsontledingen te Kertoredjo en Koentjoeng (Soerabaja)', *Landbouw* 6 (1930-3') 759,766,768, 770, 77' and appendix 11, IV and VI; G.]. Vink, Eiland Djojodihardjo and Goenoeng Iskander, 'Partieele bedrijfsontleding te Djetis (Modjokerto)', *Landbouw* 7 (1931-32) 127,132; G.]. Vink, Eiland Djojodihardjo, and M.J. van den Brand, 'Ontleding van de rijstcultuur in het gehucht Kenep (res. Soerabaja)' *Landbouw 7* (1931-32) 410; E. de Vries, R. Alers, and Soepardja Winotoatmodjo, 'Ontleding van de tabaks- en rijstcultuur in het regentschap Ngawi, *Landbouw* 5 (1929-30) 683; E. de Vries, *Landbouw en welvaart in het regentschap Pasoeroean. Bijdrage tot de kennis van de sociale economicvan]ava* (Ph.D. thesis; 2 vols.; Wageningen: Veenman, 1931,) I, 234, 236, 240; F. van Gogh and E. de Vries, 'Arbeidsontleding van de tegalancultuur in Zuid-Kediri' *Landbouw* 6 (1930-31) 85, 89, 93, 95. For further figures see also E. Locher-Scholten, 'Some Remarks on the Role of Women in Indigenous Agriculture in Colonial Java (rcth and aoth century)', in: *Papers of the Fourth lndonesian-Dtucb History Conference.* Yogyakarta 24-29 July 1983, 1. Sartono Kartodirdjo ed., *Agrarian History,* 196-237 (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1986) 234-237

68 Scheltema, *Ontleding, 26-7'*

69 Vink, Djojodihardjo, and Van den Brand, 'Ontleding rijstcultuur', 410.

70 M.B. Smits, 'Arbeidsaanwending in den natten rijstbouw op Java' *Landbouw* I (1925-26) 272-276; Vink, Djojodihardjo, and Van den Brand, 'Ontleding rijstcultuur', 410.

71 W. L. Collier, 'Declining labour absorptions (1878 to 1980) in Javanese rice production'. Paper presented at the Agricultural Economic Society of South East Asia's Third Biennial Meeting. *Agro-Economic Survey* no. 2 (Kuala Lumpur. Bogor: AES, 1979) 19-20 and appendices.

72 *Uitkomsten der beroepstelling op]I december I9JO* (Den Haag: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek. Uitkomsten beroepstelling, 1934) I, 6, 87.

73 *Volksle/lingI930. III, 86.*

74 *VolkstellingI9Jo.111, 86.*

75 *Volksle/lingI930· III, 87·*

76 *Volksle/lingI930. 1,258,11,254-255, III, 208.*

II *VolkstellingI9Jo.1,* 258; 11,254-255; III, 208.

78 *VolkslellingI930. III, 88.*

79 *Volksle/lingI930· III, 89·*

80 *VolkstellingI9Jo.1,* 258; 11,254-255; 111, 208.

81 *Volkste/ling I930. I,* 258;*11,* 254-255; *Ill, 208.*

82 *Volhte/ling I930. I,* 258;*Il,* 254-255; ***III,*** *208.*

83 *Volkstelling I930.* ***III,*** *88.*

84 *Volhtelling I9Jo. 1,89; 11,* 94-97; *Ill, 93-94·*

85 *Volkstelling I930· 1,89; 11,* 94-97; ***III,*** *93-94.*

86 *Levenswijze arbeiders. 11,88.*

87 *Levenswijze arbeiders. 11,89-91.*

88 *Levenswijze arbeiders. 11,93-5.*

89 *Leoensunjze arbeiders. Il,* 4-9; 18-23; the tables give the numbers of those earning an income, meaning an income from the estate (Huizenga, *Koe/iebudgetonderzoek, 40).*

90 *Levenswijze arbeiders. 11,18-23.*

91 *Levenswijze arbeiders. Il,* 125, 128, 131.

III 'SO Close and Yet so Far': European Ambivalence towards Javanese Servants

INTRODUCTION

Of all the dominated groups in the former colonies, domestic servants were the most sub-altern'. Silenced by the subservient nature of their work and the subordinated social class they came from, Indonesian or Javanese servants in the former Netherlands Indies were neither expected nor allowed to speak for themselves. Nor did they ever acquire a voice because of pressures in the labour market, as was the case with domestic servants in twentieth-century Europe.' Because of the large numbers of Indonesian servants, the principle of supply and demand functioned to their disadvantage. Therefore, it is rather difficult to present these servants' historical voices and experiences directly from original (written) source material.

What we can do is reconstruct fragments of their social history from circumstantial evidence. Moreover, in view of the quantity of fictional sources and the growing interest in the history of colonial mentalities, we can analyse the Dutch narratives which chronicle the coloniser-colonised relationship. It is possible to reconstruct images of Indonesian servants by decoding these representations, although we should keep in mind that this tells us more about the colonial mentality than about the servants themselves. Representations of domestic servants are part of the Orientalist tradition, i.e., of Western ideas about the 'East'.' They may serve as an illustration of Western constructions of domestic servants, of gender, and of race and ethnicity. In the household, different variations of race (Dutch, Eurasian, Indonesian), class, and gender confronted each other, and illustrated the complicated social patterns of the colonial divide.

In colonial images of colonised subjects race and gender were compelling factors, which formulated identities within specific borders. Indigenous women were part of the self-definition and self-delineation, not only of individual white/European women but also of the internal hierarchy of white colonial society.[3] Depictions of the colonised reflected representations of the

coloniser, individually, socially, and politically. Here I explore the imagery female colonial authors used in portraying Javanese domestic servants. What do the representations of the domestic servants of that time tell us about race and gender relations at home, in the personal sphere where women wielded the sceptre? Were women indeed more race-conscious or openly racist than men, as has been argued more than once in colonial historiographyr' I want to argue, first that the female discourse on servants tallied with the male discourse on the colonised, as voiced in the political arena; second that this discourse on servants articulated both 'Orientalism' and a rhetoric of the family, two attitudes which were only apparently contradictory; and finally that the rhetoric of the family functioned as a rhetoric of concealment, hiding differences of race, class, and gender.

SOURCES AND THEIR AUTHORS

Two kind of sources, both constructed mainly by European women, are informative in this respect: 1. the domestic manuals and introductory textbooks for new colonial residents; 2. children's literature, focusing on the home. Both sources are highly prescriptive and normative; they provide us with twentieth-century ideas and ideals concerning the relationship between Europeans and their servants, dealing more with theory than with practice and 'reality'. In the framework of a history of the colonial mentality, especially of women, these prescribed notions offer an illuminating, although partial, entrance into the subject. These normative 'civilising' sources do not speak, for instance, about the role of the indigenous housekeeper *(nyai),* since she was not a regular part of the twentieth-century colonial household.s

Sources always reflect the position of their authors, these sources even more so, for Western literature on Indonesia has always had a highly 'autobiographical quality', as James Rush recently stated." The authors all belonged to the European population group, the tiny minority of 0.4 percent among the 60 million Indonesians in 1930, of whom four-fifths lived on Java. One might expect different positions between female authors of *totok* (born in the Netherlands) or *Indisch* descent, but the sources do not refer to such differences} For the authors were all part of the same process of Westernisation of colonial society that took place in the first half of the twentieth century. In the years between the two World Wars a distinct sense of Dutchness and more luxurious material conditions created a *Tropisch Nederland* (,Netherlands in the tropics)' This process *of 'totokisation'* or Westernisation was heavily influenced by the growing influx of Dutch *totok* men and women." Their (temporary) immigration was made

possible by improved infrastructure and developments in the fields of hygiene and health, education, and sports. These immigrants in turn supported and developed further infrastuctural progress and strongly affected the culture of the colonial community. The newcomers imported contemporary Western ideas and theories about family life and the household, considered essential for general well-being and family welfare. In the same time, they had to be educated for their future life in the Indies through books or other means. These cultural 'exchanges,' lessons about the East and imprints from the West, can be found in the domestic manuals as well as in children's fiction.

'DIFFERENT' OR 'ONE STEP BEHIND'?

The female discourse on domestics should be analysed with, and be compared to, the framework of the male colonial discourse on the colonised other. In this political discourse on Indonesian society and Indonesians, we can identify two distinct modes of thought.[10] In line with the evolutionary theory of nineteenth to early twentieth-century anthropology, representations by Dutch progressives depicted Indonesians as similar to themselves, but less developed, still one step (or more) behind in the track of time. Indonesians, like children, would in due course catch up and be associated with the Dutch. These colonialists considered it their task to further this developmental process. Evolution theory was reflected in the colonial policy of the turn of the century, the so-called Ethical Policy. It was voiced in a rhetoric of the family - Indonesian children under tutelage of the West - with strong paternalistic overtones. Indonesians were part of the family of man but the younger generation.[11]

This rhetorical practice was not a new invention of those twentieth-century progressives, but was rooted in long administrative tradition. In the Netherlands Indies the Governor General held the honorary title of 'father' to the indigenous rulers and royalty, while indigenous civil servants addressed Dutch civil servants as 'older brothers'. Family titles were subtle and euphemistic expressions of a strict hierarchy and of power relations, requesting compliance and consensus." Thus the familial rhetoric itself had double-edged and ambiguous connotations, on the one hand one of familial solidarity and harmony, and on the other hand one that conveyed hierarchy and subtle power. This tallied with general conceptions of the family as a social institution with clear patterns of authority during the time under consideration.

In contrast with this familial rhetoric - and sometimes also in paradoxical combination with it - more conservative Dutch people in the colonies viewed Indonesians as fundamentally and innately different; different in race, cultural

outlook, and behaviour. Of both perceptions, this 'Orientalisation' or 'Orientalism' was the most racist, although this was rarely expressed in biological terms. It represented a permanent conservative trend in Dutch colonialism, exacerbated by an ever-present and deep-seated fear, an apprehension of both the unknown and the strange, whether *guna-guna* (witchcraft), *amok* (sudden explosions of rage), unknown customs, or Indonesian nationalism; fear also of the loss of the colony, which would mean the end of personal positions and would diminish Dutch political identity. What would Holland, a dwarf on the international scene, be without its giant possession, the Indonesian Archipelago, 'a farm by the North Sea'?! This existential and political vulnerability implied fearful visions of the future, repressed and therefore rarely taken into account before the Second World War, but always just below the surface.

It appears highly probable that colonial domestic servants were represented more as the 'other' than as 'one step behind' on the evolutionary ladder. The latter position was generally reserved for the Javanese elite, who could catch up by absorbing Western education. Different in race and class (and gender), servants illustrated the 'otherness' of the colonised subject in its most poignant clarity. On the other hand, we have to take into account that these servants were domestic servants. Intimately connected to the family, they formed part and parcel of a paternalistic system. The view of domestic servants as part of the family, rather than as labourers, had a long tradition in Europe.'! Hence, either 'Orientalism' or the rhetorical celebration of the family or both may have determined colonial views on domestic servants. But before elaborating upon those themes, some factual information concerning servants in the Indies before the Second World War may enhance our understanding of the subject.

FACTS AND FIGURES ON COLONIAL DOMESTICS

Domestic service had a long tradition in Java as well as in other parts of the Archipelago, and it appeared in many different forms. Depending on their status and wealth, members of the indigenous elite employed servants in smaller or larger numbers. Domestic servants could be common villagers who might be servants because of debt bondage or corvee obligations. But impoverished relatives could also join the households of their more prosperous family members and serve them. In a socially layered society like the Javanese, relationships between employers and servants were always hierarchical. They might resemble patron-client bonds and contain all the elements of distance, power, and fear but they could also be of an emotionally warm and familiar nature.[15]

Wife of the Regent of Kudus among her servants, 1860-1870 (KIT, Amsterdam).

Dutch colonialists, placing themselves above the Javanese aristocracy, accommodated to the social patterns *of]* avanese society. Eurasian women, married to and heading the households of Dutch immigrants, had played a major role in these processes of acculturation since the seventeenth century," Dutch men had accepted this pattern of domestic service all the more easily, because the climate as well as colonial prestige in their opinion demanded a leisurely pace of life. Relations between Eurasian men/women and their Javanese servants might still remain warm and familiar, especially those between women, the *nyonya* and her *babu,* as seen in Dutch colonial fiction from the Indies.'? In the twentieth century a different attitude was prescribed by and for *totok* and a growing number of *Indies* women, as we will see below.

Domestic servants were thus considered indispensable to Dutch colonial society. It was the married woman, either *totok* or *Indi5ch/Eurasian,* who was responsible for these servants in the first place. Often, the only Indonesians colonial women met in daily life were the servants.IS At the beginning of the twentieth century a European household required, as a minimum, a houseboy *(jongos* or *sepen),* a housemaid or nursemaid *(babu),* and a boy for the horses and the garden *(kebon).19* The most popular household manual of 1913 reckoned that seven servants were needed: in addition to the *jongo5,* the cook *(kokki),* the *babu,* and the *kebon,* someone was required for the sewing *(jahit)*

Jongos, babu, kokki, and *kebon,* Bogor, West Java, 1905 (KIT, Amsterdam).

and washing, as well as a coachman and/or a driver."? Another manual recommended ten." Between four and six servants was the generally accepted number among Dutch colonialists in the twentieth century. Rich people could have more, poorer ones might have less, even only one servant. In the cities, where tap water, gas, and electricity were gradually introduced after 1900, the number of servants would decline. New city planning and construction involved smaller houses with modern sanitation, providing less room for servants who traditionally lived in the backquarters of their employer's house, often with their families around. In this new situation servants might come in

only during the day and live in the *kampung*.[22] But whether servants stayed on the grounds of the house or in the *kampung*, domestic service remained an essential feature of colonial culture. Even in dire economic circumstances (such as the economic crisis of the '930S) Dutch colonial families adhered to this ostentatious privilege of power.[23]

Only a small number of Indonesian/Javanese were, in fact, servants: in 1930 a mere 2 percent of the total Indonesian working population were classified as domestics, i.e., 350,000 persons (300,000 in Java, 50,000 in the Outer Regions). The actual number of Indonesians engaged (and registered) as domestic servants in 1930 seems to have been closely related to the presence of Europeans, rich Chinese, and the indigenous courts. Where these were concentrated, the largest numbers of servants could be found (Java, Sumatra's East Coast).[24] Domestic service formed part of a stratified, elitist society, characterised by an abundant supply of labour.

The numbers and composition of this small sector of the Javanese labour force illustrate the pre-industrial character of Javanese society in those years. Contrary to the situation in Europe, where a feminisation of household services had accompanied the Industrial Revolution and where domestic service had become the main occupation for women," domestic servants in colonial Indonesia were not exclusively or mainly female.[26] Of the indigenous servants in Java and Madura 39 percent were male, and 6, percent female in '930, the majority of the latter being unmarried women (72 percent).[27] Only 4 percent of the total female labour force worked in households, while only one percent of all working men were employed in domestic service." Nor was it the largest source of employment for Indonesian women, as it was in Europe. For Indonesian women it remained one of the less 'popular' activities. Indigenous agriculture (employing nearly 40 percent of all working women), (small-) industry (nearly 25 percent), and (small-)trade (12 percent) prevailed over household labour.[29]

As far as the position of family servants within the household was concerned, vague outlines of a hierarchy among them can be discerned. Most often, *the jongos* or *s(e)pen* would come first; in other cases, a trusted and experienced older *babu.J°* The *jongos* had the task of preparing breakfast, dusting and cleaning the galleries of the house, and serving food at meals or during social gatherings. Although he performed tasks which in European eyes might belong to the domain of women, he resided in the 'outer world' of display and representation, the galleries, the receiving of guests, which in Javanese tradition is the male part of the house. Second in importance might be the (always female) cook, for a *kokki* who could 'prepare a nice rice table and serve a reason-

able European dish', was considered 'of inestimable value and incalculable dignity'." The (female) *babu's* task was to dust and clean the sleeping rooms and to care for the children, while the *kebon* (gardener), always male, worked outside and fetched water if necessary. Sewing and washing were not restricted to one gender; they belonged to the more flexible tasks open to either men or women. The division of labour among servants according to gender seems to have been rather fluid. It tallied with hierarchies of age and with the fluid gender systems and subtle gender boundaries that characterised Javanese social structure." Moreover, it concurred with traditional lines of spatial organisation in the Javanese household, the outer world being reserved for men, whereas the inner space and the back of the house were the domain of women.f

Recruitment of servants took place mainly by word of mouth, either on the recommendation of trustworthy servants or through the intercession of European friends. In Batavia in the 1930S some professional *Bedienden-kantoren* (offices for servants) mediated between employers and servants. The Association for Housewives in the Indies *(Vereeniging voor Huisvrouwen in lndii),* founded in 1931 in the wake of a late professionalisation of female activities in the Indies.> did the same. It provided its members with *bediendenpassen* (evaluations, or letters of recommendation, which employers completed after one year of service); it published advertisements and organised contact addresses.u For others the indigenous *kabar angin* (rumour, literally: the sound of the wind) did its work: some families found their personnel waiting for them when returning from a European leave. From these data we may deduce that a more or less clearly defined 'professional' identity existed among servants. One was a servant, a *babu,* a *kokki.*

Indigenous domestics were trained on the spot. They learned the work from their *nyonya* or from other servants. The issue of simple basic education in housekeeping skills for *desa* girls emerged as a point of discussion only in the second half of the '930S. There are no indications that it got off the ground.[36] In the 1930S the Association of Housewives in the Indies organised some short-term courses in cooking (European menu) for Indonesian *kokki* as well as courses in sewing for *babu*.[37] In the 1920S and 1930S some secondary schooling (two years) was available after primary education to prepare girls of all population groups for household activities (the se-called *nijverheidsonderwijs voor meisjes).* A specialised school for home economics for girls was only founded in 1931, but because of its requirements of a high school certificate it was beyond the reach of Indonesian personnel.

Regarding the salaries and fringe benefits servants received we remain in the dark. The Association for Housewives in the Indies produced lists of the

In the Regent's *pendopo,* Magelang. Ceremony to decorate servants with 'medals of loyalty' for their long years of service, ca. 1935 (KIT LV, Leiden),

standard wages in the 1930S for their members, but did not publish them. Days off were not common for indigenous personnel; just before the Second World War such days off were officially recommended for European personnel but not for Indonesians.f

In the 1920S and 1930S some changes took place in the position of servants, due to the *totokisation* of colonial culture. The demand for higher standards for (indigenous) personnel was translated into practical guidelines and inducements such as medals for faithful service and a (very limited) number of courses in domestic work offered by the Association for Housewives in the Indies. The economic crisis of the 1930S, on the one hand, restricted the number of servants in individual households (a way of cutting the budget); on the other hand it pushed new groups into the labour market, amongst others Eurasian girls, trained in *nijoerbeidsscboien.* These changes, however, were barely reflected in Dutch representations of Indonesian servants in domestic manuals and children's fiction.

MANUALS AND ADVICE L,TERATURE

Dual messages characterise the manuals and instruction booklets for travellers and new-comers.l? In the first place, prescribed spatial arrangements marked otherness. Servants lived on the grounds in the servants' quarters at the back of the house, where the kitchen, the washroom, and the provision room were situated, in short where the physical functions of colonial superiors were cared for. Servants did not come into the house of their masters except to do their work. The *nyonya* was not expected to come to the servants' quarters either, except in cases of illness or internal conflicts between servants. The liberty and autonomy of the latter required this distance, as one author maintained.[4°]

Spatial and social separation was considered necessary not only in terms of physical contact but also as far as other bodily aspects were concerned. According to these manuals, a *cordon sanitaire* should be socially constructed around each home, as well as individually within each home. Children should not be allowed to eat the food servants gave them, instead mothers should feed the children themselves. Modern education required a larger role for mothers, as the moulders of moral and responsible citizens.!' Children should also be forbidden to have conversations with the Indonesian servants, as this would hamper their language abilities and give them the wrong Dutch accent. Moreover, servants might endanger health and morality. In the '930S, a medical doctor cautioned mothers against surrendering their children to the care of the *babu,* since her unclean hands might infect small girls with venereal disease. Teenagers should be kept away from the servants' quarters, because there they might learn about sexuality, which was considered improper and precocious by the puritanical twentieth-century Western moral codes.[42]

Strict rules reigned in the field of hygiene. The *babu* should never wash the clothes of her master and mistress together with her own textiles, 'a serious offence against tradition'r" If she did so, she could be fired immediately. Nor should she wash those clothes at the well near the servants' quarters; her master's bathroom was the proper place. The two worlds were not to touch one another too intimately, as the same author informs us. Fear of the other was expressed in terms of cleanliness and hygiene. The white body itself was considered beyond the reach of the other race. This message was voiced both explicitly and implicitly'a These modern manuals preached lessons, that deviated from earlier practices of race relations within the majority of the (Eurasian) households where the *babu* massaged their *nyonya* and were in close relationships with them. Moreover, this distancing conveyed a clear

message in a paradoxical situation. For it were the servants, who by preparing food and serving it, by washing and cleaning, by looking after the children, and by living near the bathroom, were physically the most proximate of all Indonesians that the colonisers met. Or to quote Ann Stoler: 'Resident native servants were part of the accoutrements of European colonial households but also viewed as the ultimate transgressors of bourgeois civilities in those same homes'.45 If we take the messages of the manuals seriously, this nearness must have been scarcely bearable according to twentieth-century white opinion.

Stories about servants were indeed highly ambivalent. On the one hand, Indonesian servants were depicted as dirty, lazy, and unreliable; on the other, they were praised for their inner ethos *(innerlijk.e beschaving),* skills, compliance, and modesty, for being easier to find and easier to get along with than servants in Europe. On the one hand, *babu* were condemned for spoiling European children, since they raised little potentates by fulfilling all the children's wishes: the Javanese custom of not allowing any child crying conflicted in a direct way with European pedagogical notions about the productive role of frustration in 'building' a child's character.s" On the other hand the *babu* were praised for their loyalty and devotion:

A European family in the Netherlands Indies with their *babu* in *sarong* and *kebaya,* 1922 (KIT, Amsterdam).

> *The devotion of a babu towards a child she is caring for is touching. True, one has to keep an eye on her to prevent bad habits; nevertheless I think that the devotion of the babu is infinitely greater than that of a Dutch nursemaid. She attaches herself wholeheartedly to your child and keeps this attachment her entire life.47*

Virtually all authors underlined the difference in habits *(adat),* in language, and in emotions between colonial employers and indigenous servants. However, they did so in diverse ways and tones. Servants might be vilified or their actions might be described in more understanding terms. For instance, their differing opinions regarding personal property were condemned outright or 'explained', by calling theft a sport, i.e., taking what was left behind.[4] Their habit of asking for a *perskot* (an advance, in Dutch: *voorschot)* was smiled upon or indignantly rejected.

The Eurasian J. Kloppenburgh-Versteegh, one of the most important spokeswomen on the subject, held her Indonesian servants in very low esteem indeed. Of all the authors, she demonstrated racism in the most explicit way: 'in everything you will see that Javanese servants are not European personnel but only machines'r'? Repeatedly, she typified them as filthy, lazy, and unreliable. But she also ended her book with the - then common – 'ethical' rhetoric of the family: 'Our servants are like big children. Let us try to understand their situation and feel compassion for them, this will urge us to improve their lot, to uplift them'i'" European (both *totok* and Indies) women should educate their servants, teach them hygiene, and improve their standard of life. This metaphor of the child, one of the most common for servants, implied a motherly attitude on the part of the mistress.[5]

These images of the other, of servants, mirrored images of self. European women themselves should be clean and active. They should control their servants, teach them hygiene, and be very careful when receiving them into their household. Order and regularity should reign supreme in the home. We Europeans are obliged to set the example in everything, even if it gives us trouble and displeasure'is- One of the means of doing so was to learn about native habits, another was to learn Malay, the *lingua franca* of the Indonesian Archipelago as soon as possible - this would enhance European prestige among the servants. We do not know whether this result was reached. The language booklets are filled with commanding and critical remarks, and teach how to order servants around in stiff, short sentences.[5]

Moreover, women were taught to react in a wise and restrained manner. Only then would they be able to control and supervise their servants.[5]

Behaviour toward the servants should be calm, self-possessed, never angry, but always resolute and superior.

> *In all behaviour, in word and deed, one should remain the calm superior, the loftier person, to whom the servants will look up.* [. .] *A hot temper is always harmful, especially to the mistress, who by her excitement does not manage to control her sentences.* 55

Or as Kloppenburg-Versteegh put it:

> *Remember not to speak to the servants when in anger: in the first place you will not impress them; in the second place you will upset yourself, while the servant might ridicule your words* [. . .]. 56

One should *not* express 'complaints' in the form of harsh scolding: 'natives hate rows and abusive language'.57

This 'emotionology' (ideologically-permitted emotions) coincided with Javanese ideals about *halus* (restrained) behaviour. But first and foremost, it reflected the cultural ideals of the colonial upper class of that period, which exacted the same attitude from women toward their husbands and children. European education should be geared *to* self-discipline and self-control; mothers had to function as role models. For white women, anger was the least appropriate of all emotions, as it would also lower white prestige.i"

And *to* maintain and bolster white prestige was one of the *most* important tasks of colonial women. It was after all one of the main reasons to have servants. As a male writer concluded: 'In the first place, a decent European [man/woman] does not perform manual labour or housework because of his prestige, and in the second place it is far *too hot to* do *so'*.59 Prestige was the reason behind proper and restrained behaviour and behind learning the servant's language and being informed about his or her culture. Like men in the outside world, women should maintain white prestige within the domestic sphere.

Of course there may have been (and were) Dutch and Eurasian women in the Indies *who* wanted *to* know more about the society and people among *whom* they were living, and *who* thus trespassed and crossed the social borders of colonial culture. But this was not the primary message of the Colonial *School for* Girls and Women in The Hague, founded in 1920. The *school's* program was informed by the same ambivalent attitudes of 'Orientalism' and 'familisation.' Succeeding earlier short courses on hygiene for women going abroad, the

school was firmly rooted in a pragmatic approach: the growing need for hygiene as well as the professionalisation of the domestic scene. Both 'movements' were exported to the tropics. Between 1921 and 1938 approximately 1,000 women followed the three-month courses in tropical hygiene, tropical medicine, food, ethnology, and Malay, offered by the school. 60

Behaviour toward servants formed part of the lessons in home economics. On the one hand, the school provided its pupils with the negative images of Kloppenburg-Versteegh, whose 1913 book was the main textbook on domestic servants for some years. On the other hand, the school depicted Indonesians, painted so often 'unnecessarily black', as completely different people, but 'not less' than Dutch people.t" Although servants did not figure prominently in the curriculum, the school's success was attributed to its efforts to increase the knowledge of the language and the habits of the servants among its students. It achieved its goal of preventing unnecessary fear of the strange surroundings, 'of natives, wild beasts and serpents [sic]'6, As former pupils reported, servants were 'no absolute strangers', once these pupils arrived in the Indies[63] The fear of the unknown had evaporated.

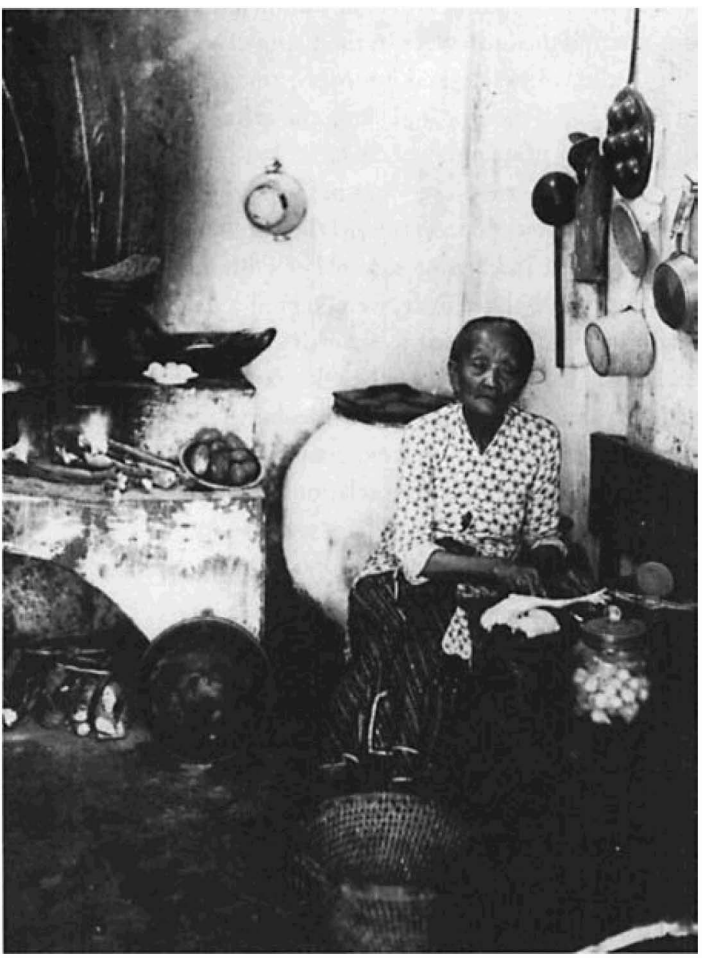
> *The idea of necessary contact with the silent, dark population of their furure country no longer contains anything oppressive, since they have learned to understand the language and the religion and know how to respect it.* 64

But the Colonial School wanted to do more. It wanted to prepare Dutch women for their 'beautiful and educational' task in Indies society, to make them 'pioneers' in medical care, and stepping outside the narrow enclave of their Indies' home. The self-image engendered in these Dutch women was one of active 'mothering'. Mothers in the Indies, especially those outside Java, were held responsible not only for their own family, but for lots of families, including those of their domestics, first and foremost in cases of illness. The school wanted to teach women 'how they could be a helpmate and an adviser to them [their domestics] and the natives in general in their surroundings'i's The school should raise, as a firm believer of 'ethical' ideas postulated,

> *a woman's consciousness of her future, her task, her calling, when she possesses the means to find the way to the soul of the people she is going to live with* [..] *when she fiels that she also has a national task, i.e., to create bonds of appreciation and devotion between the people of the Netherlands and the people of Insulinde (the Indonesian Archipelago)66*

Next to their tasks of educating responsible citizens and maintaining colonial prestige within their households, it was this larger framework of social mothering that incorporated white women into the realm of colonial domination. It enlisted them in the Ethical colonial project and diminished the boundaries between the home and (colonial/Indonesian) society at large. To European women servants were the primary representatives of this society. The Colonial School's official ideology suggested that the task of white women was broader and nobler than being enclosed in the house. It might even convert the housewife's role into an attractive occupation, providing her with an honourable social purpose to live for. In this discourse we find again a familial rhetoric, **in**

Kokki in her kitchen, no year (KITLV, Leiden),



close but not unequivocal harmony with the otherness and Orientalisation of domestic servants. This female discourse was completely in tune with the male-dominated political discourse of those years.

Race, class, and gender, 'the axes along which inequalities of power between men and women [and between coloniser and colonised] are organised and maintained'j'? each played their own (hidden) role in this discourse. Domestic servants were to a large extent desexualised. Little difference was made between male and female domestics. Servants were treated as a non-gendered group, in which only the *babu* might be granted a special place, since she, through her tasks and her (appreciated) devotion to the children, came closest to the family. Neither were class differences between employer-employee taken into account; only incidentally does one find any remark on that subject." The third marker of difference, race/otherness, figured most prominently in the discourse, voiced in terms of differences in culture and education.

In sum, we find dual messages in the European female manuals on domestics in the Indies: distance and nearness; unreliability and loyalty; Orientalisation and familial rhetoric, reflecting the colonial discourse on Indonesians as part of the family of man to be educated or as the totally different.

This twofold discourse on servants betrayed the deeply ambivalent attitude of white Dutch women and men toward their Indonesian surroundings in general, and toward their Indonesian servants of a different race and culture in particular. Servants, male and female, were kept at a distance psychologically and ideologically, in glaring contrast to their daily proximity. It was this nearness, unavoidable and undeniable, as well as the experience of being dependent on Indonesian servants that stimulated the ideology (and practice) of distance. Of all Indonesians, the servants came closest to Europeans. Mistress and servants were tied together in an ambivalent relationship; their lives were interwoven in a most intimate manner.[69] This intimacy was one face of the Janus head of the employer-servant relationship, which opposed the second face, that of power, prestige, and superiority.

It is interesting to note that the literature about Indonesian servants, published in the Netherlands during the Second World War, tended to stress the rhetoric of the family more strongly than ever before. In this period of national Dutch trauma and of a despised Nazi ideology, ex-colonialists apparently idealised the colonial relationship, glorifying a national colonial past as well as the harmonious cohabitation of different races, inside and outside the home.7°

In practice, being a white or Eurasian housewife in the Indies was to reign over the known (a house) and the unknown (servants). It meant arriving with Western ideas of superiority and power, of hygiene and education, and having

to adapt oneself to tropical circumstances and Indonesian habits, which both were unknown and frightening. This created the psychological tensions and the paradoxical attitudes of colonial employers, that Indonesian/javanese servants had to endure.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

How were these dual messages translated into children's literature, if at all? What visions of the other did Dutch children in the Indies absorb? Whether **or not literature may serve as a trustworthy source of information about the** past is the subject of a lively debate among historians and social scientists. Without entering into a detailed discussion of these matters, we can say that children's literature offers a useful source for the study of attitudes and mentalities of grown-ups. Children's literature, especially Dutch literature from the period between the two World Wars, was highly prescriptive, representing the ideas of and ideals about (colonial) society, which the European middle-class considered valuable enough to pass on to the younger generation. This literature represented more how things should be, than how they were, more the ***'Sollen'*** **than the** ***'Sein')I*** **Hence, children's literature can be used as an entry to adolescents' comprehensions of the nature of colonial society and its inhabi**tants. Like domestic manuals it can be studied for Dutch colonial norms and **values concerning servants.**

The valuable bibliography on this topic, edited by Dorothee Buur, allows us **to put this source in its proper** context." **The** 'Indies' **children's fiction** (i.e., Dutch books set either in the Indies or in the Netherlands but referring to experiences and characters from the Indies) was thoroughly colonial. The genre was dominated by the Netherlands as far as themes, characters, and economic **context were concerned. Because of the restricted demand in the** Indies, **very** few books indeed (only 4 percent of the books mentioned in Buur) were edited there; editors in the Netherlands dominated the Indies market.Z'Writers were mainly Dutch *totok,* born in the Netherlands; no books for children, written in Dutch by Indonesians, were published in that period.x In the '930S, books for **Indonesian children in Malay or Javanese were virtually non-existent, except for the editions of the government service, the Commission for Popular** Reading Material *(Commissie uoor de Vo/ks/ectuur* or *Ba/ai Pustaka),* which published *wayang* stories, Indonesian legends, and translations of European fairy tales and children's classics.zi

The subject matter and themes of this literary genre were colonial as well. Dutch colonial history (the period of the Dutch East India Company, the

Aceh war) figured prominently; contemporary politics (nationalism) were rarely included. Indonesian culture was included primarily in books about Indonesian legends and fairy tales; Indonesian children as central characters figured mainly in tales by missionaries and progressives.:" **In** books for girls, the central character was reserved for Dutch girls in the Indies or for Dutch girls from the Indies returning to or living in the Netherlands. Eurasian girls also appeared, but to a lesser extent. Here I will be dealing with books for girls, set in the Indies in the decades between 19IO and 1940, which were written mainly by *totok* women, because these focus on family life, and thus bring **domestic servants into our range of** vision.r?

This literature for girls followed the general pattern of Dutch children's fiction of the period. The books were more ethical than aesthetic and conformed to the rigid moral codes of the first half of the twentieth century. As a colonial **government report stated in 1920:**

> ***If*** *the effect is an awakening, reinforcing and comforting one,* ***if*** *the book has* ***touched your conscience,*** ***if*** ***it has reconciled you to your work, your duties, your*** *surroundings, to nature, to people* [...] *then you have read a good book.* [...] *A good book* [...] *arouses loving thought and noble deed; a bad book,* [...] ***depresses one to doubt.***[78]

Girls' books were ethical and 'good' in that sense. They described reconciliation to difficulties as the resolution of all problems, either of a personal character (the hot-tempered girl developing into a mature woman, preferably a housewife) or of the family. The plot often presented a stereotyped narrative: **the death of a mother, or incidentally another family member, as a crucial** moment offering the possibility for change, adaptation, and -- what we now call - 'personal growth'. Presumably, death provided the story with emotional depth; it offered the heroine appropriate grief, and she could then exemplify the possibility of overcoming misfortune by reconciling herself to the situation,"?

As might be expected from literature of the period between the two World Wars, these books represent highly traditional gender roles and gender relations.[80] The (white) mother is depicted as the emotional centre of the family, **always at home. Camaraderie and friendship characterise the relations between** the parents. Girls have good relationships with them and treat their parents with respect or even friendship. Although some female protagonists yearn for a **career, novels often end with 'the most beautiful role for a woman, that of a wife and mother'.**[SI]

Race relations are ambivalent. Most books centre on *totok* families. Open discrimination is frowned upon, but Indonesians are rarely its victims; in general it concerns the painful experiences of Eurasian children, scorned by whites. The view of Indonesian society is extremely limited. Java is present in lyrical descriptions of a beloved nature or of glorious holidays in the mountains. Race relations are restricted to relations with servants or with Javanese mothers. The Javanese mother, silent and withdrawn, is depicted as full of admiration for her mixed-blood children; her children treat her with (some) respect but they know they have to follow the white family when the white father dies. In *Dona Atve"* the seventeen-year-old Eurasian girl of the same name is not allowed to stay with her mother and moves in with her rich uncle in Batavia (now Jakarta). Here her all-white aunt has problems accepting her, although her younger white cousin grows very fond of her. A car accident (she is hit by her older cousin's car) changes her life; her aunt regrets her former prejudices. She and her husband allow Dona to become a singer in Europe. In the end, however, Dona leaves a promising career and returns to East Java, her maternal home, to become the wife of her childhood friend on the coffee plantation. In another novel, *Sinjo-Juut,*,] a young Eurasian boy of that name is fetched by his Eurasian aunt - after the death of his father - to live in the city; he has to leave his Javanese mother who later comes to him. However, his mother has to remain in the servants' quarters of the house. Her in-laws do not allow her inside. Sinjo juul in the end manages to find his identity and to accept his mixed roots. As an adult engineer, he returns to the Indies and vows that his mother will never live in the servants' quarters again.

SERVANTS IN YOUTH LITERATURE

The representation of servants in this literary genre occurs within the context of the traditional, Europe-oriented family. Small wonder, then, that the rhetoric of the family prevails. In one of the most popular books, *De Canneheuveltjes* [The Canneheuvel Family], written by Marie Ovink-Soer (wife of a former civil servant and one of the older Dutch women who were close to and inspired Kartini), servants are depicted as natural friends of the children. Baboe Tjidem takes them for walks to her mother in the *desa,* where the youngest child's dreams of becoming a buffalo boy. Servants take part in the games at a birthday party. Having to leave them behind when the family returns to Holland is a painful experience, especially for the youngest, for Baboe Tjidem saved the child's life during an earthquake that killed the children's mother.

Race relationships in this popular book (published in 1912 and reprinted four times in the 1920S and 1930S) are harmonious. There is a fruitful cooperation between the step mother and the *jahit,* who together prepare party costumes for the four children. When two of the children get lost in the mountains during a wonderful holiday, an old Javanese *desa* woman receives and consoles them (in which language they communicate is not clear). The 'evil' characters are usually the Chinese, not the Indonesians. The novel clearly delineates the lines of authority. Succeeding some authoritarian European nurses and an indulgent Eurasian 'aunt', the second *(totok)* mother finally brings order into the house: 'She did not reign but guided and advised, did miracles with a soft, appropriately spoken word, both in her contact with family members and with servants'r'" Anger again is excluded.

The same mixture of familiarity and authority is repeated in many other books in this genre. The relationship of the Eurasian Dona Alve with the servants is even more natural and dose, the *babu* being a kind of aunt.[SS] In *Kitty's leed en vreugde* [Kitty's Sorrow and Joy] the Dutch high school student Kitty deplores the departure of the Ambonese girl/housekeeper Nel who had so quickly become an integral member of the family. Children from the Dutch family in *Tussen sauiab': en bergen* [Between Sawahs and Mountains] are friendly with their servants, whom they found waiting for them in Bandung

Domestic servants in the garden with their utensils: *kokki, jongos, jahit,* and *kebon,* West Java, 1910 (KIT, Amsterdam).

upon their return from their European leave. These servants organise a *slametan* (a ritual meal) for the new house, at which the father invites the children'to make this house a good one for everybody, including the servants'.86 The servants help, admire, and care for pet animals along with the children. A motherless and difficult European boy, accepted into the family, offers the **moral lesson of the story. This representation of harmonious race relations** results in the ideal of one of the children (after a holiday at a tea plantation in the mountains) becoming a planter himself The message is clear: the harmonious Indies are the home land for a new generation of Europeans.

But there are other messages as well. **In** *Een moeilijk jaar voor de Van Heerdentjes* [A Difficult Year for the Van Heerden Family] the widowed father admits that Holland has remained a source of his yearning: 'Despite all those years in the Indies I have always had the strong feeling that we do not belong here."? **In** this novel we find more distance and superiority toward the servants. These servants may 'love Nonna Elly, but native servants are just like small children: one has to keep a tight rein on them.''' As prescribed in the manuals, but without specific reference to them, the oldest girl, who assumes the deceased mother's place, washes and feeds the twin babies herself.

The adult accusation against *babu,* that they spoil and over-indulge Dutch children, resonates throughout much of the young people's literature, but only vaguely in the books under review here. Their loyalty prevails. **In** *Aan den Oedjoeng* [At the Seashore], a fourteen-year-old girl has recently lost her mother; she remains alone with her father and a much beloved, affectionate, and faithful *babu,* who helps her.[89] Admiration for servants' loyalty is expressed most clearly in the (Christian-inspired) story, *Wongsos offer* [Wongso's Sacrificej.?" This *jongos* leaves the European family without permission and uses his savings to fetch Chinese medicine in Singapore for the European girl Nonnie, who has been paralysed by a snake bite. He takes a plane (aviation is a recurring, literary theme in this genre in the '930S, recalling the great aviation endeavours of the time), but after his return he is fired for desertion. When, by chance, his story is revealed, Nonnie's father restores him to his position. His Chinese medicine did not really help, Western pharmaceuticals are represented as clearly superior. But the girl recovers and old Wongso gets a pension (and a Bible). **In** this book, the tone is not one of familiarity; the father admits he does not know 'how to handle natives', especially when Wongso has asked permission to leave (using the popular excuse that a member of his family has died). But a profound respect for the servant's selfless sacrifice offers this book its moral message; the father asks to be forgiven for his hot-tempered and premature reaction.

'I am born here. 1 love the mountains and the people here.'
Illustration from *Ams boudt van Indie (1941).*

A last book, *Ams houdt van Indië* [Ams Loves the Indies], published in 1941, seems to summarise many of the themes of manuals and youth literature, mentioned above. This book is highly informative about *totok* family life in Semarang and very Dutch in its focus on the cosiness and intimacy (*gezel-/igheid)* of the family?' The fifteen-year-old high-school student Ams, the oldest of four children, was born in the Indies. Her father is a businessman. Servants are integral characters in the narrative. A natural and relaxed contact seems, at first glance, the primary message of this book.

But all the afore mentioned images of servants resurface. Should the youngest learn Malay from the servants? Is she not spoiled by the *babu?* In a long dialogue between Ams and her mother (a mother who in this book actu-

ally survives), the latter explains that as a *totok* she had been afraid that this might happen. For that reason she had decided not to have a *babu* when Ams was born. In passing, the mother confesses her earlier racism: 'Also, I still had such an antipathy towards the Natives and the idea that one would touch your dear pink skin with its brown hands made me rebellious. What nonsense, Ams!'[92] Then she continues with her story. After a year, when she was expecting her second child, she became ill and had to seek assistance. Two loyal servants, who have remained with them, entered the house and put the household in order. 'And ever since, Baboe and I have worked together.' Gratitude to the servants is expressed as part of the dialogue between mother and daughter; and in the end the mother advises Ams: 'You should not exaggerate the bad influence of Baboe Roes. You will see, it will turn out for the better later'.

Relations with servants seem to be harmonious. However, if we look at the story with Toni Morrison's eyes, we see other 'black perspectives'i?! Turning points in the plot revolve around the mistakes made by servants or other Indonesians. Because the driver has not put the car's hand brake on, while the toddler and Baboe Roes are playing in it, the car inadvertently starts moving. Had it not been for the resolute reaction of the second son who leaps up on the car's running board and manages to grab the steering wheel, they would have crashed. When the mother is ill, the servants grow unruly. The *kebon* tries to break into the house, but Ams, warned by Baboe Roes, prevents the burglary. The servants are the ones who make the mistakes; heroism is a European attribute and is ascribed to Ams and her brother.

'Orientalism' is not absent either. At various difficult moments the father confesses: 'they are such different people from us' or 'They really are difficult people, those Natives' (when the driver, being ashamed of the near accident, asks permission to leave).94 Paternalism is also very evident. Father provides the servants with their salaries, their *perskot* (advance); he teaches them how to save money. Both attitudes of 'Orientalism' and paternalism are expressed at moments when Javanese behaviour - its withdrawal and silences - contrasts most strongly with Dutch directness and openness (or bluntness) and is misunderstood. The Javanese *slametan* (religious meal) offered for the happy ending of the car incident, however, is gladly attended by the family members.

Paternalism in a more hidden form can be discerned at the end of the story. When Ams and her brother Wim take a walk in the mountains during a long holiday, they find and rescue a Javanese boy who has fallen in the woods. They discover that he is Soedarso, one of Ams's classmates. Soedarso realises that he owes his life to her. Arns's mother confesses after having met his uncle, a

wedono **(Javanese civil servant): 'it is for the first time since I have been in the** Indies [fifteen years or morel] that I meet such a Javanese. Except for our ser- **vants we have no contact with Javanese families'.**[95]

If we read the story as a metaphor, the messages become clear: brown is **where the danger lurks, whether in a runaway car or in a thieving servant;** white educates and even saves lives, for which brown will be grateful. The political ideal of association of coloniser and colonised - or the harmonious coexistence on a more or less equal level - is the final imagery of this novel. Together the children - Ams, Wim, and the now-recovered Soedarso - go for their last holiday walk. The following conversation develops:

> ***'We have a very nice country indeed,' Ams said with satisfaction.***
> *'But this is not your country.' Soedarso said calmly.*
> *'This is not my country?' Ams said with indignation.*
> *'Holland is your country,, and Soedarso looked at Ams, a little shy about the effict of his words.*
> *'Holland,' said Ams, 'Holland is the country of Mother and Father; they belong there. But not me, I belong here.' In her excitement Ams got up and stretched out her arms. 1 belong here,' she repeated. 1 was born here. I love these mountains and the people here!' Soedarso looked at Ams as she stood on the mountain top and he felt a deep sympathy for this blond girl from a different race who had accepted him so simply as a comrade and now also made his country her own.* [96]

These words occur near the end of the story. They reflect the strong connection Indies-born children may have felt toward their country of birth, from which they - like Dutch adults - could not distance themselves. The quote itself is thoroughly colonial. The idea of cultural or political association is expressed by appropriating the Javanese mountains and therefore the Indonesian Archipelago, without asking the original inhabitants (Soedarso) for their opinion. Even stronger: the Dutch author inscribes into the Javanese boy a tacit agreement with her gesture and a love for the white girl who has saved his life. Or as Soedarso 'softly' says: 'I did not know [...] you considered it that way'. The rhetoric of the family implies an ownership of land and people, and a disregard for the opinions of Indonesians.

If we compare the views on servants in this children's novels with those in the manuals, a few differences and many similarities come to the fore. Youth literature stresses harmony and family; its messages of difference are more

implicit. Class differences are not elaborated; they remain hidden under the ideology of the family in which everybody has his own (hierarchical) place. Differences in gender are not acknowledged. Female servants sometimes play a more prominent role than male ones, being closer to (or in) the house and to the family. But servants' dedication toward the children may be found in both male and female servants - in Wongso and in Baboe Roes. Racism is rarely explicit, at most it is described as an emotion of the past. However, all differences, especially those of class and race, are subtly present when we take these stories not only in a literal sense but also as metaphors. In that sense, as metaphors for the relations between employer and indigenous servant, they are exemplary for the colonial relationship itself, in which the Dutch supposedly educated and lifted the indigenous population to a higher level, while Indonesians were seldom addressed directly.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The colonial imagination regarding servants in the pre-war Indies consisted of two 'ingredients': 'Orientalism' or otherness as well as nearness or 'familisation'. It reflected the male political discourse of the period, which incorporated both elements. Although colonialism, as an adventurous European enterprise and as a practice of institutional dominance, may have been primarily a man's affair, European women were not divorced from it. The ideology of the colonial state as the family of men was derived from the home situation and was expressed in metaphors relating to the household which included women. Explicitly, European women occupied their place in the colonial order in different ways: as the modern caretakers and educators of their children to become responsible citizens of the colonial state as well as guardians of white prestige within the household among Javanese servants, and as colonial parents in charge of training, educating, and supervising these servants as their special pupils. Servants can be considered the metaphor for the colonial relationship, being both included in and excluded from the colonial family. Since the family at that moment in history was hierarchically structured, the ideology of the family gave colonial masters, whether male or female, a superior position and the right to rule, both inside and outside the home.

Were colonial women in the Indies more racist than men? It seems doubtful. The discourse on servants clearly contained racist overtones in language and thinking. European women enacted ambivalent attitudes and formulated dual messages in the private sphere, culturally reserved for them at that period in history. Men, however, employed the same rhetoric in theirs, the political

and industrial arena. Both 'Orientalism' and 'familisation' were expressed, for instance, during the debate about the regulation of women's night labour in the all-male People's Council in 1925,97 Was female racism perhaps more painful because it was felt at home, in the informal setting of the family, where personal feelings were closer to the surface and abstract political structures could not conceal inhumanity? Even there, racism was not a female prerogative. In many novels it was the father who expressed the 'otherness' of the servants (for instance in *Wongso's offer* and *Ams houdt van Indie).*

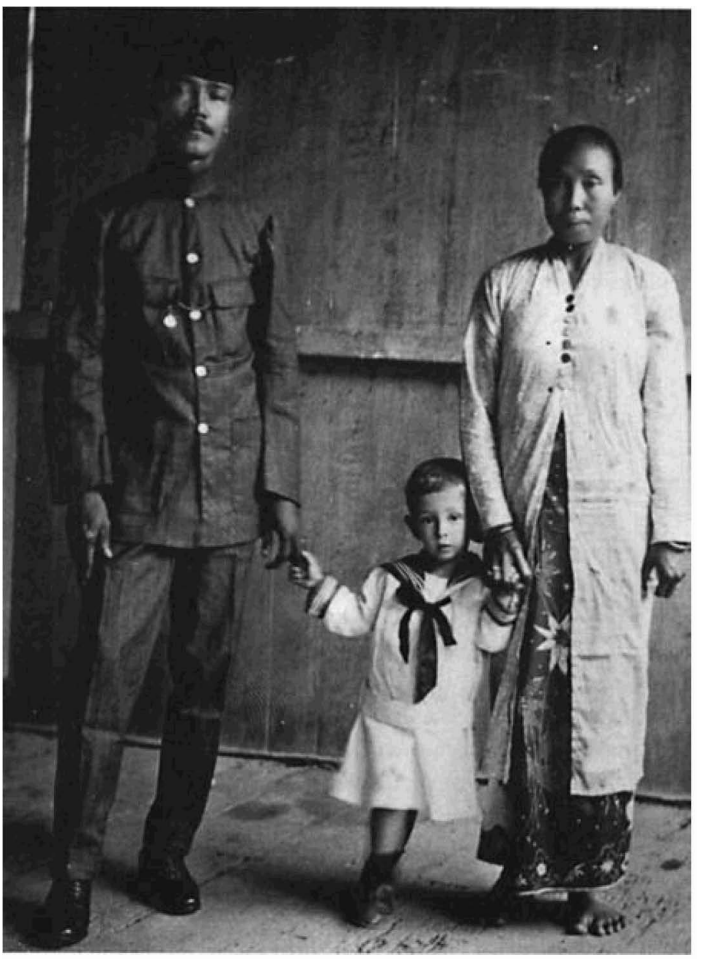
Otherness and 'familisation' seem to be paradoxical opposites. Difference and nearness created complicated and paradoxical models of relationship. Manuals warned housewives of the first, literature educated girls about the second experience. But both genres of literature embodied elements of the opposite attitude. 'Orientalism' and 'familisation' may even have been indissolubly related to each other, woven into a yin and yang entanglement. On the one hand, the nearness of indispensable servants and the average European family's dependence on them caused a psychological reaction of distancing, in terms of spatial design as well as symbolic categorisation. On the other hand, this distancing could not go too far, for otherness would lead to a frightening unknown. Hence, otherness could only be mastered by making it, both literally and figuratively, familiar. And what was and is more familiar than the family? 'Familisarion', in turn, could not be endured without some simultaneous distancing. Dutch colonials, it seemed, were caught in this vicious cycle. Female rhetoric about servants illustrated the paradox of the Dutch colonial mentality, which in the twentieth century moved between the opposites of domination grounded in social distance and development policies that incorporated Indonesians into a family model. 'Orientalism' and familial ideology belonged to each other as opposite sides of the same colonial coin.

Of the two attitudes, the rhetoric of the family might seem the more progressive; it had, however, its own faults. It masked many differences, especially those of race, class, and gender, the axes along which inequalities of power are usually structured (see above). It reduced servants to the status of children, who had to behave well and do what they were told, i.e., to be 'clean, honest, compliant, and capable'i'" This rhetoric had its own hierarchy and might be used in a progressive as well as in a conservative sense.

It is the concealing and obscuring character of this rhetoric, which made (and still makes) it politically useless, or even dangerous, for 'subaltern' groups who want{ed) to delineate their political (oprposition. This criticism of familial ideology is not new. It has been expressed again in recent years with regard to Asian countries, such as the modern Indonesian state, and the modern indus-

trial organisations in japan.?? In the case of modern Indonesia, we may conclude that - even if the Suharto political rhetoric of the family did not have its roots in colonial 'familisation' - it was strongly reinforced by the language and ideology of Western colonialism.

Dutch boy with *babu* and male servant (the driver?), ca. 1910 (KIT, Amsterdam).



Notes

Since the Vassar historian Lucy Maynard Salmon published the first study on domestic service in the United States in 1890, the history of American and European domestic service has become a well-documented field of historical analysis. See for instance, Faye E. Dudden, *Serving Women. Household Service in Nineteenth Century America* (Middletown, CN: Wesleyan University Press, 1983); Theresa M. McBride, *The Domestic Revolution. The Modernisation Of the Household Service in England and France I820-I920* (London: Croom Helm, 1976); Uta Ottmuller, *Die Diemtbotenfrage. Zur Sozialgeschichte der doppelten Ausnutzung oon Dienstmadcben im deutschen Kaiserreicb* (Munster: Verlag Frauenpolitik, 1978), and bibliographies. For the Netherlands: Barbara Henkes and Hanneke Oosterhof, *Kaatje ben je boven? Leven en werken van Nederlandse dienstbodes I900-I940* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1985); Barbara Henkes, *Heimat in Holland. Duitse dienstmeisjes I920-I9SO* (Amsterdam: Babylon-De Geus, 1995); Jannie Poelstra, *Luiden van een andere beweging. Huishoudefijke arbeid in Nederland I840-I920* (Amsterdam: Spinhuis, 1996).

2 E. Said, *Orientalism* (jrd imprint, London and Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987).

3 Ann Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in zoth Century Colonial Cultures,' *American Enthnologist* 16(1989):26-51. This article also appeared in J. Breman, ed., *Imperial Monkey Business. Racial Supremacy in Social Darwinist Theory and Colonial Practice* (Amsterdam: vu University Press, 1990) 35-70. I refer to this edition.

4 See K. Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class under the Raj. Imperial Attitudes and Policies and their Critics 1793-1905* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980); Rudy Kousbroek, 'De Mems in de koloniale samenleving', in: josine Blok et al. eds., *Deugd en ondeugd [aarboek voor vrouwengeschiedenis 13*, (Amsterdam: USC, 1993) 149-162; on counter-arguments, see Mieke Aerrs, 'Gemengde gevoelens bij gemengde berichten uit de Oost', in: *Ibid.*, 163-174; Margaret Strobel, 'Gender and Race in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Empire', in: R. Bridenthal, C. Koonz, and S. Stuard eds., *Becoming Visible. Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987) 375-398; Staler, 'Making Empire Respectable'; Claudia Knapman, *White Women in Fiji I8jS-I9jo. The Ruins Of Empire?* (Sydney: AlIen and Unwin, 1986); Helen Callaway, *Gender, Culture and Empire. European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke and London: MacMillan Press, 1987); L.E. Clerkx and W.E Wertheim, *Living in Defi. Its Society as Imaged in Colonial Fiction* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1991).

5 I did not turn to adult fiction, memoirs, or autobiographical writings here. For the *nyai*, see amongst others Tessel Pollmann, 'Bruidstraantjes. De koloniale roman, de njai en de apartheid', in: Tessel Pollmann, *Bruidstraantjes en andere Indische geschiedenissen* (The Hague: Sdu, 1997) 9-31, Nicole Lucas 'Trouwverbod, inlandse huishoudsters en Europese vrouwen. Het concubinaat in de planterswereld aan Sumatra's Oostkusr,' in:]etske Reijs et al. ed., *Vrouwen in de Nederlandse koloniën. Zevendejaarboek voor vrouwengeschiedenis I986* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1986) 78-97; Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'The Nyai in Colo-

nial Deli: A Case of Supposed Mediation', in: Sita van Bemmelen et al. eds., *Women and Mediation in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLY Press, 1992) 265-280.

6 James R. Rush, Journeys to Java: Western Fiction about Indonesia 1600-1980', in: RW. Winks and J. R Rush eds., *Asia in Western Fiction* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991) 156.

7 *VolkstellingI9JO. VI. Europeanen in Nedertandscb-Indie (Batavia: Landsdrukkeri],* 1933), 68.

8 As the title of a famous atlas ran: *Atlas van Tropisch Nederland* (Batavia: Topografische Dienst, 1938).

9 Although *totok* also alludes to Indonesian Chinese born in China, I use the term here in its European context.

10 See chapter 2.

11 Francee Gouda, 'The Gendered Rhetoric of Colonialism and Anti-Colonialism in Twentieth-Century Indonesia', *Indonesia* 55 (April 1993) 1-22.

12 For different aspects of this rhetoric in Suharto's Indonesia see Madelon Djadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 'lbuism and Priyaization: Path to Power?' in: Elsbeth Locher-Scholten and Anke Niehof eds., *Indonesian Women in Focus. Post and Present Notions* (Leiden: KITLV Press, I9871r992) 43-52; julia Suryakusuma, 'PKK: The Formalization of the Informal Power of Women' (Paper Third International KITLY Workshop Women as Mediators in Indonesia', Leiden 1988).

13 H.L. Wesseling, *Indie verloren, rampspoed geboren en andere opstellen over de geschiedenis van de Europese expansie* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1988) 288.

14 This view can already be found in fourteenth-century Florence. See Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, Women Servants in Florence During the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', in: RA. Hanawalt ed., *Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986) 56-80. See also Dudden, *Serving Women,* where the development from household member to domestic servant in nineteenth-century America is described. According to nineteenth-century law in Europe, domestic servants had the status of children, 'protected by and subject to the authority of the parent employer'; McBride, *Domestic Revolution,* 15. In the Netherlands in 1906 a servant was not considered a wage earner, but 'a household member', hence not in need of social legislation; Henkes and Oosterhof, *Kaatje, 59.*

IS See, for the many forms of Indonesian servants, the descriptions in the book for girls written by the Javanese Arti Poerbani (pseudonym of A.P. Djajadiningrar), *Widijawati, het]avaansche meisje* (Amsterdam: Keizerskroon, 1948); Minarsih Soedarpo. *Niet louter kleine toegenegenheden. Herinneringen van een Indonesische vrouw I924-z952* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1999) JJ.

16 Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World Of Bataoia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983); also Jean Gelman Taylor, Women as Mediators in voc Batavia', in: Van Bemmelen, *Women and Mediation, 249-264.*

17 For instance E. Breton de Nijs, *Vergeelde portretten. Uit cen Indisch familiealbum* (Amsterdam: Qperido, 1973).

18 See the quote of note 95 of this chapter.

19 As the young wife of a young civil servant learned from her older colleague. See M. H. Szekely-Lulofs, *Onze hedienden in Indie* (Deventer: Van Hoeve, n.d.) 10; B. van Helsdingen-Schoevers, *De Europeesche vrouw in Indie* (Baarn: Hollandia, 1914) 32.

20 J. Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Het {even van de Europeesche vrouw in Indic* (Deventer: Dixon, 1913).

21 C.]. Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken? Wat moet ik doen? Wenken aan het Hollandsche meisje dat als huisvrouw naar Indie gaat* (and imprint; Gorkum: Noorduyn, 1927) 46-47'

22 Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan mod ik denken?*, 44-45. Personal communication of Mrs. L. Blumenthal, June 6, '993.

23 Ems I.H. van Soest, *De Hollandsche vrouw in Indie* (Deventer: Van Hoeve, n.d.) 96. Traces of this attitude can still be found in the memories of the oldest generation from the Indies, living in the Netherlands. Yvonne Keuls, *Mevrouw mijn moeder* (Amsterdam: Ambo, 1999) 14.

24 Deduced from *Volkstelling I9JO. VIII, Overzicht uoor Nederlandscb-Indie* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936) 126-127. In Java and on Sumatra's East Coast, 2 percent or slightly more of the working population was in domestic service. In Bangka it was as high as 2.8 percent. Elsewhere the number was less than one percent.

25 McBride, *Domestic Revolution*, 82-99. In Europe the dramatic growth of this institution had gone hand in hand with the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation and had reflected the burgeoning growth of a middle class. New middle-class 'arrivistes' asserted their new status through the employment of domestics, while domestic service offered women the possibility of upward mobility. Domestic service remained the major occupation of women until 1940 in the United States, England, France, and the Netherlands; McBride, *Domestic Revolution*, 111; Henkes and Oosterhof *Kaatje, 14.*

26 *Volkstelling I9Jo. VIII*, 126-127. Seven hundred servants belonged to the European population group: housekeepers replacing an absent mother, or nurse-maids for children. Just 0.5 percent of the servants were of Chinese descent. Here only the Indonesian group will concern us, since the others figure rarely in the non-statistical sources.

27 Deduced from *Volkste/ling I9JO.* 111. *Uitkomsten uoor Oost-]ava* (Batavia, Landsdrukkerij, 1934) 94-95· Of the male servants most were married (57 percent).

28 *Volkstelling I9Jo.* /11,94-95.

29 Deduced from *Volhte/ling I9Jo. Ill, 94-95.*

30 For the first, see Kloppenburgh-Versteegh, *Leven* and D.C.M. Bauduin, *Het /ndische leven* (The Hague: Leopold, 1927); on the second, Szekely-Lulofs, *Bedienden, 20.* According to the latter the *bahu* received a monthly salary of *f* 25, while the *jongos* and *kebon* received *f* 9 and *f* 7·

31 Bauduin, *Indische{even, 67.*

32 Shelly Errington, 'Recasting Sex, Gender and Power: A Theoretical and Regional Overview', in: Jane M. Atkinson and Shelly Errington eds., *Power and Difference. Gender in Island Southeast Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) I-58, esp. 5; Shelley Errington's remark is useful in this respect: 'In island Southeast Asia, by contrast [to the us], speculations about the reasons of differences between people [...] sel-

dom put anatomy or physiology at the center.' *Power and Difference*, 57. See also Ward Keeler,'Speaking of Gender in Java,' in: Atkinson and Errington, *Power and Difference*, 127-153.

33 Although researchers on the household in Indonesia accept this as a general pattern, no specific studies on the spatial organisation of the Central Javanese household seem to be available. For Madura, see Anke Niehof, Women and Fertility in Madura, Indonesia.' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Leiden, 1985), 215-216. On West Java, see R. Wessing, *Cosmology and Social Behavior in a West]avanese Settlement* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Relations, Southeast Asian Program, 1978) 53-63.

34 Its establishment was strongly influenced by the crisis and a growing longing for an organisation of women. Housewives, having to cope with fewer servants and less money, had to organise their households more professionally. *De Huisvrouw in Indii* 1, 10 (August 1932) 5. The purpose of the association was to create a platform for housewives and to enhance the status and practice of housekeeping. In its monthly journal, *De Huisvrouw in Indit,* attention was given to such activities as cooking and sewing, gardening, pet animals, children, etc. The association was explicitly open to members of all population groups. A few Indonesian *priyayi* (Javanese elite) ladies took part in it, but the atmosphere of its journal remained thoroughly European as well as apolitical. The association counted more than ro,ooo members just before the Second World War, more than the largest European political parties at the time. As the largest women's organisation, it was an important source of information on practical aspects of housekeeping in the Indies.

35 On *'Bediendenkantoren,'* see *De Huisvrouw in Indië* 7, 2 (1938) 72}6 A.J. Resink-Wilkens, 'Huishoudonderwijs voor het dessa-meisje', in: M.A.E. van Lith-van Schreven and J.H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp eds., *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek I936* (Jogjakarta: Kolff-Buning, I936) 6I-67.

37 *Huisvrouw in IndieV,* 2 (1936) 83; VII, 7 (1938) 643·

38 In 1914 four servants, working in one family together earned *f* 60.- (Van Helsdingen-Schoevers, *Hollandsche vrouw,* 32). Figures were only published in the 1930S. *De Huisorouui in Deli* 1, 8 (1931). The car driver received the best remuneration. In the 1930S the Association for Housewives in the Indies provided medals in silver and gold for long service. Of these, 500 were distributed between 1936 and 1939, some to servants who had been with one family for more than forty years *(Huisvrouw in IndieV,* 10 (1936) 700; VI, ro ('937) 593; VII, 10 (1938) 518; VIII, n ('939) 618.

39 The most widely used is the work of J. Kloppenburgh-Versteegh, *Het leven van de Europeesche vrouw in Indie* (Deventer: Dixon, 1913). Eurasian herself and raised in the Indies, the author was the mother of a dozen children. See also Van Helsdingen-Schoevers (also a Eurasian), *De Europeeschevrouw;* Van Helsdingen-Schoevers, *Indie en Europa. Causeriin en beschouwingen over het leoen in Ned. Indie over de vrouw en het kind en bun belangrijke problemen* (Leiden: Leidsche uitgeversmij, 1929). *Totok* women giving information to others after 1920 were Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken?;* C. Swaan-Koopman, *Vrouwen in Indie* (Amsterdam, 1932); M. Szekely-Lulofs, *Onze bedienden in Indie* (Deventer: Van Hoeve, 1941). A man's voice can be found in D.C.M.

Bauduin, *Het Indistbe leven* (The Hague: Leopold, 1927); S. Franke, 'Indonesisch personeel,' in: C.W. Wormser ed., *Zóó leuen wij in Indie,(Deventer:* Van Hoeve, 1943) 241-253.

40 Szekely-Lulofs, *Bedienden,* 22; see also Franke, 'Personeel', 246.

41 Staler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 64; Ann Laura Stoler,'A Sentimental Education. Native Servants and the Cultivation of European Children in the Netherlands Indies', in: Laurie]. Sears ed., *Fantasizing the Feminine in Indonesia* (Durham, NC/London: Duke University Press, 1996) 71-91.

42 P. Peverelli, 'De hygiene van het gezin', in: Van Lith-van Schreven and Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp, *Indiscb Vrouwenjaarboek I936,* 100-104; also *Ibid,* 149; Szekely-Lulofs, *Bedienden,* 55. The puritanical standards of the Indies community can be derived from a book review in *Huisorouus in Indie,* stating that the drawings of the female parts of the body made the book under review inappropriate for the common room in the home; *Huisvrouw in Indie* V, 2 (1936) 115. See also Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Leoen, 67;* Bauduin, *Indische leven,* 59; Van Soest, *De Hollandsche vrouw, 28.*

43 Szekely-Lulofs, *Bedienden, 42.*

44 Similar rules about hygienic separation of masters and servants reigned in Dutch homes; yet, in the Indies, they were acerbated by racial difference. Ileen Montijn, *Leoen op stand, I890-I940* (Amsterdam: Rap, n.d. [1998]) 109, 227, 235-238.

45 Sroler, 'Sentimental Education', 72.

46 Kloppenburg-Versteegh again was the most expressive in this respect. *Babu,* according to her had very special means to silence a child and get it to sleep: not only rocking but even opium, 'rubbed on parts of the body decency prohibits being called by name.' *(Leven,* 64-65). For a more balanced opinion, see *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek,* 44, 230.

47 T. Brondgeest Sr., *Nederlanders in Indie* (Baarn: Hollandia, 1919) 39. For a description of the faithfulness of male servants see also G.]onckbloet, 'Over Inlandsche bedienden,' *Studiin, Tijdschrift voor Godsdienst, Wetenschap en Letteren* (1917) 269-294, and C.]. jongejans-van Ophuijsen, 'De B.B.-vrouw in de Buitengewesten' in: Van Lith-van Schreven and Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp, *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek I936, 44;* Franke, 'Indonesisch personeel', 247.

48 Szekely-Lulofs. *Onze bedienden, 35-36.*

49 Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Leven, 54·*

50 Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Leven, 112.*

51 Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken?,* 50-51.

52 Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denkent, 3-4.*

53 Sandarella Plak, 'Van sarong en kabaya naar mantelpak. De rol van Europese vrouwen in Indie van 1900 tot 1942'(Unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Political, Social and Cultural Sciences, University of Amsterdam, 1993)37-41.

54 See also Van Helsdingen-Schoevers, *De Europeesche vrouw,* 25, and Van Soest, *De Hollandscbe vrouw, III.*

55].M.]. Catenius-van der Meiden, *Ons huis,* in: Indie (Semarang: Masman and Strofnk, 1908) 141.

56 Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Leuen,* 53. Also Van Helsdingen-Schoevers, *De Europeesche vrouw,* 32.

57 Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken?, 50.*

58 Carol Z. Steams and Peter N. Steams eds., *Emotion and Social Change. Towards a New Psychohistory* (New YorkILondon: Holmes and Meier, 1988) 7; Ann Laura Staler, *Race and the Education Of Desire. Foucault's History Of Sexuality and the Colonial Order Of Things* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 1995) 143; Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Leven,* 90-91, 98 on behaviour towards children. The same conduct is prescribed in children's fiction. Girls should not be choleric or hot-tempered (G.C. van der Horst-van Doom, *Kitty's liefen leed. Van Indisch meisjesleven* (Gouda: Van Goer, 1923). Practice might be different. In 1936 it was noted that children should speak to servants in a friendly way, and should not scold them 'as one hears so often'; parents should set the example. M.A.E. van Lith-van Schreven, 'Zullen wij onze kinderen naar Holland zenden?', in: Van Lith-van Schreven and Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp, *Indisch Vrouwen-jaarboek* 1936,231.

59 Bauduin, *Indische teoen, 65.*

60 Archive Koloniale School voor Meisjes en Vrouwen [Colonial School for Girls and Women], file 77, 78. Algemeen Rijksarchief (General State Archives), The Hague. 2.20.24

61 Brochure 1923, Archive Koloniale School, file 77; Radiorede (radio speech) Ros Vrijman, 27-3-1930,6, Archive Koloniale School, file 81.

62 Radiorede Ros-Vrijman, 19-7-1938, Archive Koloniale School, file 81.

63 Brochure 1923; Vierde propagandaboekje 1927, 13. Archive Koloniale School, file 77; Radiorede Ros-Vrijman, 19-7-1938, Archive Koloniale School, file 81.

64 Brochure 1923, 12. Archive Koloniale School, file 77.

65 Brochure 1923, 10, 12; Derde propagandaboekje 1925, 4, 12. Archive Koloniale School, file 77·

66 Brochure 1923, 9. Archive Koloniale School, file 77.

67 jean W. Scott, 'Gender, a Useful Category of Historical Analysis,' *American Historical Review* 91(1986) 1054.

68 A journalist, Melis Stoke, reminded his readers that servants could rarely be identified with the indigenous population in general. Melis Stoke, *Wat men in Indie moet doen en laten* (The Hague: Leopold, 1939) 100. See also Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Leuen, 6.*

69 AIbert Memmi has stressed the intimacy of this relationship as a reason behind the violence of servants toward their masters. A. Memmi, *Dominated Man. Notes towards a Portrait* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971) 178.

70 Szekely-Lulofs, *Bedienden,* passim; Franke, 'Indonesisch personeel', 252: 'we belong to them and they to us. Together we continue to build our beautiful archipelago [...]. Our heart gropes for that of our brown brother.' Szekely-Lulofs, famous for her highly critical Indies novels *Rubber* and *Coolie,* voiced the same ambivalence regarding servants as the other authors did.

71 L. Dasberg, *Het kinderboek als opvoeder. Twee eeuwen pedagogische normn en waarden in het historische kinderboek in Nederland* (Assen: Van Gorcum 1981); Bob Dixon, *Catching Them Young. 1. Sex, Race and Class in Children's Fiction; 2. Political Ideas in Children's Fiction,* (London: Pluto Press, 1978) vel. 148.

72 See Dorothee Buur, *Indische jeugdliteratuur. Geannoteerde bibliografie van jeugdboeken over Nederlands-Indie en Indonesie* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 1992). Of her 602 titles from the period 19°0-1942 only 26 were published in the Indies, and many of them after the German occupation of the Netherlands in 1940 had cut all ties between the Netherlands and the lndies.

73 Dorothee Buur, *Indischejeugdliteratuur,* 21.

74 Buur mentions only one book, that of Arti Poerbani, *Widijawati,* written in Dutch and published later, in 1948.

75 See].H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp, 'lnheemsche kinderboeken', in: Van Lith-van Schreven and Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp, *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek* I936, 189-194.

76 This Protestant mission played an important role in popularising the lndies in Holland through children's fiction about Indonesian children, living their lives, having their adventures, and being adopted or rescued by the missionary in the end. Of books published from 1900 to 1942, 12 percent present the lives of Indonesian children as a central topic, two-thirds of those being inspired by the mission. *Buur,leugdliteratuur.*

77 *Buur,leugdliteratuur,* 17-20.

78 *Een weg tot volksontwikkeling (Openbare bibliotheken en leeszalen).* Uitgave van de Commissie voor de Volks-lectuur (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, n.d. [1920D.

79 Deceased parents figure in 16 percent of all youth books in the period 19°0-1942, published in *Buur,leugdliteratuur.*

80 See Dasberg, *Kinderboek,* 182 on the traditional imagery in youth literature before *1940;*].C.H. Blom, 'Een harmonisch gezin en individuele ontplooiing. Enkele beschouwingen over veranderende opvattingen over de vrouw in Nederland sinds de jaren dertig,' *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffinde de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 108 (1993) 28-50.

81 Van der Horst-van Doom, *Kitty's leed en vreugde.* Also, by the same author *Tineke* (Gouda; van Goor, n.d.).

82 M.C. van Zeggelen, *DonaAlve* (Amsterdam: Scheltema and Holkema, 1928).

83 S. Franke, *Sinjo-juut* (Amsterdam: Scheltens and Ciltay, 1939). He is one of the few male authors used here.

84 M.C.E. Ovink-Soer, *De Canneheuveltjes. Een verhaal uit het Indische kinderleven* (Gouda: Van Goar, 1912) 76.

85 That this is not typical for all lndo-Europeans is shown by the aunt of Sinjo-juul.

86 C.H. Sevenhuysen-Verhoeff, *Tussen sawah's en bergen* (Amersfoort: Valkhoff, 1936) 38.

87 Tine Ophof-Sterk, *Een moeilijkjaar voor de Van Heerdentjes* (WeltevredenlAmersfoort: Visser/Valkhoff 1921) 198.

88 Ophof-Sterk, *Een moeilijkjaar, 134.*

89 A. Romein-Verschoor, Aan *den Oedjoeng* (Santpoort: Mees, 1928).

90 M. van der Hilst, *Wongso's offer. Een Indisch kinderverhaal* (Hoorn: Edecea, 1937).

91 M.J. van Marle-Hubregtse, *Ams houdt van Indu* (Deventer: Van Hoeve, 1941). It even presents a map of a colonial house.

92 Van Marle-Hubregtse, Ams *houdt van Indie, 34.*

93 Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark. Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass.!London: Harvard University Press, 1992). In this study Morrison analyses the concepts of black and white in white American literature from the starting point that the dream is the dreamer. Hence, what it said about the object, tells us something about the subject/writer.

94 Van Marle-Hubregtse, *Ams,* 45, 58.

95 *Ibidem,* 178.

96 *Ibidem,* 196.

97 See chapter 2 of this volume.

98 These were the qualities regularly requested in the 1930S advertisements for personnel in *Huisvrouw in Indie* 5-2,2 (1936) 131.

99 See Karel van Wolferen, *The Enigma of Japanese Power. People and Politics in a Stateless Nation* (New York: Knopf, 1989); Laura Cooley, 'Maintaining Rukun for Javanese Households and for the State', in: Van Bemmelen et.al., *Women and Mediation in Indonesia, 229-248.*

IV Summer Dresses and Canned Food: European Women and Western Lifestyles

INTRODUCTION

'The ruin of empire' or 'the most noxious figure in the annals of British imperialisrn" - **statements about white women in the colonies have rarely been flattering.** In British fiction, the influence of the *memsahib* in British colonies is explicitly condemned. Famous authors like E.M. Forster and W. Somerset Maugham scarcely hide their contempt for these idle ladies - whether of upper-class or humble birth - who came to the colonies and failed to understand the rules and realities of empire. They paint a picture of white women destroying not only the warm colonial relationship between (male) colonial masters and (female) colonised servants, but also the brotherly understanding **between brown men and white men.**

For the British colonies these opinions have become more or less obsolete. Female scholars of British colonialism have described white women either as **the warm supporters of empire or as the semi-critical hut maternalistic allies of** nationalism." **All these authors agree on one issue: white women did not** destroy a congenial relationship between male coloniser and female colonised, **simply because this relationship never was a congenial one. Denigrating** phrases like 'walking dictionaries' and 'bedbooks' which colonisers used to **refer to their native concubines) indicated the basically unequal character of** these relations. The colonial agenda was set by white men and inspired by notions of hierarchy and prestige. Around the turn of the century relations between European colonisers and indigenous populations began to change. **This was not due to female influence but came as a result of advances in West**ern technology and the growth of the colonial population - making this group **socially more self-sufficient, endogamous, and** closed.'

Dutch literature has been less indicting of European women for their colo**nial role. Although some critical comments about the racism of white women is** documented," **Dutch women in the colonies have usually been portrayed in a more positive way than their British counterparts. But what do Dutch women's**

attitudes in the realm of the typical 'female' cultural domains of fashion and food tell us about their attitudes towards the Dutch colonial project? Do these domains prove Dutch women to be 'villains' or 'victims' of empire, complicit with, or opposed to, Dutch colonial culture? How do they construct Dutch notions of race, class and gender?5

Clothing can be seen as an expression of social distinctions such as age, class, and gender as well as an indicator of social norms and values. Fashion and dress function as social markers for both groups and individuals, creating a desired identity.

> *Clothing does a good deal more than simply cover the body for warmth, modesty or comfort.* [. .] *Our habitus of clothing creates a "face" which positively constructs an identity rather than disguising a "natural" body or "real" identity"*

Cooking and food are less visible identity markers, but, like clothing, they closely follow socially defined prescriptions. And, like clothing, they directly affect the individual's body. Hence, an analysis of the clothing habits and food preferences of European women in the Indies during the period '900 to '942, and in particular in the period between the two World Wars, may shed some light on the construction of female identity in Dutch colonial society.

Source material from women's magazines, from the women's pages of newspapers, and from household manuals can be read and analysed as colonial discourse. They confirm that European women contributed in their own way to a general process of Westernisation of the pre-war colonial culrure.? In their social behaviour towards servants (see chapter 3) and in the areas of clothing and food, these women reinforced existing patterns of hierarchy and social difference, traits belonging to the male colonial administration. But before exploring this subject further, we must first locate and identify the main characters, the European women, and define their place within the colonial community.

EUROPEAN WOMEN IN THE COLONIAL COMMUNITY

As mentioned in chapter 1, the first quarter of the twentieth century saw a rapid expansion of the European population group in general and women in particular. While the sex ratio changed from more than 600 women per 1,000 men in 1900 to nearly 900 per 1,000 in 1930, regional variations occurred, which made the differences even smaller. In Java for instance, where 80% of the European population was concentrated, the sex ratio was 902 women to 1,000

men, while the numbers of men and women in the cities were almost equal.[8] *Totok* women, born in the Netherlands, especially had been 'responsible' for the expansion. Their numbers rose spectacularly from 179 per 1,000 men in 1900 to 582 per 1,000 in '930. Between 1890 and 1920 male emigration from the Netherlands to the Indies had risen by 200%, female emigration by 300%.[9] Indies-born made up the majority of the Europeans - 7' percent. However, male wage earners and/or heads of households were equally divided between both *totok* and Indies-born men, and the census of '930 concluded that slightly more than 50 percent of the European population could be regarded as *blijver*, or permanent resident.'?

As an expanding community, the Europeans were a relatively young group. The majority were between 20 and 50 years of age and busy building a career. *Totok,* expatriates with high levels of education, dominated this group. In the older age groups the *totok* representation declined to 30 percent. *Totok* women remained a minority in all age groups, although in the 30-39 age bracket *totok* women were nearly equal in number to European women born in the Indies. Because of the age difference between men and women in European marriages in the Indies, there were few *totok* women above the age of 60 in the Indonesian archipelago. By this age they had generally returned to the metropole. But although they were in the minority, the *totok* women, who came from Europe as the 'established' elite, gradually became the primary trend-setters.

The colonial culture was basically urban, because Europeans lived in cities, women more than men, and the *totok* women more than Indies-born women. More than half of all European women and two-thirds of *totok* women lived in one of the 'big six' cities of Java." In the Outer Regions, the reverse was true. Here, most European women lived somewhat isolated, in the countryside, where their husbands were employed in estate agriculture, government service, the mining industry, or in the missions.

Thus the experiences and needs of European women in the Indies were diverse. While the large majority lived comfortably in urban surroundings with tap water and electricity, others lived as solitary pioneers in primitive circumstances. But whether they lived in big cities or in rural outposts, one thing these women had in common was their civil status; they were married. In 1930 the Indies had relatively more married women and a larger number of widowed and divorced people among the Europeans than in the Netherlands. The number of divorced Europeans in the Indies was even four times larger than in the Netherlands: 2 percent versus 0.5 percent. The number of marriages had risen as a result of new economic growth and changing cultural sensibilities - concubinage was now disapproved of. By '930, the *nyai* (the indigenous housekeeper!

concubine) was largely absent from the European horne.v The European community had become more endogamous, especially on Java.

Marriage turned European colonial women into housewives. In accordance with cultural norms of the Dutch upper and middle classes, it was unusual for European women to be professionally employed. In r930, only r5 percent (or 12,500) of the total European labour force of 85,000 was female.[13] Even in the Netherlands, which had never been famous for a high participation of women in the labour force, more women worked (24 percent), while among the Indonesian population on Java and Madura, 32.5 percent of the registered wage **earners were women. During the 1930S the number of unmarried European working women seems to have risen, while the professional education opportunities for women also** increased.t-

The female European work force was for ninety percent concentrated in Java. It consisted largely of non-married women; only 5.5 percent of married women had a profession (compared to 8 percent in the Netherlands and 29 percent in Java and Madura). This female workforce was equally divided between *totok* and Indies-born womcn.c European women worked in the traditionally **female occupations of education and nursing, while unmarried women born in** the Indies could also be found in domestic service and in government jobs, such as the post offices. They were valued as capable office workers. Women did not **dominate these professions, however - men and women were more or less** equally represented. Only domestic service (employing a mere 850 Europeans) **was 90 percent female; these women were hired as housekeepers and nursemaids, to help or to replace European mothers.**

European women, 'coming out' in growing numbers, entered small European communities which were characterised by highly conventional gender roles. Moreover, they entered a stratified society in which Europeans automatically occupied the highest positions. Foreign Orientals represented a commercial middle class, while the overwhelming majority of the Indonesian population comprised the working lower classes. Hierarchy not only defined **inter-group relations, but delineated intra-group differences as well. The** European community itself was a strictly stratified community. Older *totok* **such as highly placed civil servants, army officers, and company directors occu**pied the top positions. Young *totol:* and Indo-Europeans were found in the middle stratum, while most of the Indo-Europeans filled the lower ranks serv**ing as clerks in firms or the colonial government.** [16]

Functional hierarchy was extended to include social life. At receptions and **dinner parties, a husband's income was the basis of the ranking system. The** professional background of husbands determined female behaviour and atti-

tudes. Colonial women were 'incorporated wives', their identity was largely determined by the profession, status, and income of their husbands.'? The European colonial community can thus be characterised as a small, conservative, urban elite group, living in a provincial environment. The men were relatively highly educated and trained, but intellectual and cultural activities were minimal.,8 The group's relatively low numbers, the focus on work, and the lack of diversions left little room for personal space and provided fertile ground for gossip and rumours. Regular evening visits for an hour, often to people living nearby, were part of a rigid system of social control. Clubs were the heart of social life. Living in the Indies was to live 'moderately un-free'i'v Iike living in a 'glass house' with open galleries and airy open rooms.

European women generally enjoyed a life of leisure, with four to ten servants to do the house work. As we have already seen, contact with Indonesian society (certainly for most of the urban *totok* women) was often restricted to servants. The servants performed tasks which were not suitable for the lady of the house to perform; because of the heat and her status, her role was restricted to supervision. But this could be an onerous task, if we are to believe the household manuals that introduced *totok* women to their future life in the tropics.[20]

Totok women did not come to the colony completely unprepared. Preparatory information was available in manuals, but it could also be obtained from the Colonial School for Girls and Women, founded in The Hague in 1920 and could as well be learned on board the steamship from older 'incorporated sisters'." The manuals, written by Indo-European women before 1920 and later by *totok* women, defined the duties of women in clear social messages and moral assignments. Women were responsible for civilising the untamed colonial community, as part of what was considered to be a 'civilising mission', They were instructed to uphold the values of white morality and prestige and to prevent a loosening of their husbands' sexual standards. They had an obligation at home to educate not only their children, but their servants as well, and they had an important role in the development or the uplifting *(opheffing)* of the indigenous population in their direct surroundings. The female manual writers and propagandists of the Colonial School had defined a function of active mothering for these women."

Maintaining hygiene and cleanliness was an important part of this maternal mission." Following the nineteenth-century discovery of bacteria, a professionalisation of the housewife in Europe took place, which set her on the path of health, hygiene, and cleanliness. In the Indies, the tendency towards hygiene and cleanliness was reinforced by tropical exigencies and by fear of the unfamiliar surroundings,

Modern Western norms required keeping the indigenous people with their unknown and 'strange' habits at a distance. In the twentieth century, the mother raising the child - instead of the *babu* - became the new norm. During the '920S and '930S, young progressive *totok* mothers often taught their children with the help of the Clerkx-method and Montessori materials brought over from Europe. Even an upper-class Indo-European child who entered the *totok* **community through her mother's second marriage was warned 'that outside** work [school], contact with natives would not be tolerated'i's The social order **was organised along** racial lines; **transgression of that order implied a fear of 'pollution'. The colonial community was closing its doors on 'outsiders': the** non-European groups of so-called Foreign Orientals (Chinese and Arabs) and the indigenous (Indonesian) population.[25]

In practice, most European women – again women in missionary circles were often an exception - remained focused on their own group, concentrating on refining the manners and habits of their own community. Husband and children came first. For these women, the Western image of the ideal woman prevailed, in theory and in practice. They remained at home without a profes**sion, devoted to their loved ones, doing welfare work in women's organisations** or they led a life of social outings, tennis, and parties. How was this lifestyle expressed in fashion and food? How did these women answer the pressing daily questions of what to wear and what to eat?

WHAT TO WEAR?

We may start by comparing two pieces of advice, one written in I896 by the Indies-born].M-J. Catenius-van der Meijden, and the other in '923 by the *totok* C-J. Rutten-Pekelharing. Both were concerned with the typical Indies outfit. In I896, this included the following list of clothes, necessary for women of moderate means (better-off women required twice as many):'6

6 sleeping *sarong*
2-3 neat *sarong*
6 sleeping *kebaya*
6 neat *kebaya*
12 under-chemises *(kutang)*
18 chemises
12 pantaloons
24 pairs of stockings
12 flannel chemises
6 normal petticoats

6 neat upper petticoats
1 or 2 coloured skirts
1 neat flannel upper *kebaya*
6 dresses
1 silk blouse
2-3 peignoirs, morning dresses
3 hats
1 pair of spectacles for dust
1 pair of bathroom slippers
1 pair of dress slippers
2 pairs of walking shoes
1 or 2 pairs of cotton boots

By '923 this list had changed almost completely.'? More moderate and more European, it included:

12 combinations [underwear]
12 petticoats
6 night-gowns
6 night-chemises
6 white skirts
3 shantung skirts
12 white blouses
4 white dresses
some Bombay (silk) dresses
2 bath kimonos
1 silk kimono
12 pairs of stockings
1 blue serge skirt (for the rain)
1 bathing suit
1 easy-to-wash pair of trousers for trips and tours
1 pair of sport shoes
linen boots

A comparison of the two lists indicates the sorts of changes that had taken place. White cotton blouses, skirts, and dresses had become popular. Around '900 dresses and skirts had been ankle-length, and blouses long-sleeved. **In** the '920S dresses were knee-length, lighter and made of cotton and linen. Trousers **and bathing suits for women, that were out of the question around 1900, became part of the modern woman's outfit.**

From *sarong* and *kebaya* to summer dresses. Illustrations from the popular children's book *Ot en Sien in Indië* by A.F.Ph. de Man, 1911and 1935 (From G. Brantas, 'Zijn de nationalc helden Ot en Sien later deftige koloniale kindertjes gewordcn?', *Documentatieblad kinder- en jeugdliteratuur* II (1987) 37c).

Most remarkably, the *sarong* and *kebaya* had completely disappeared. Even before 1920 this typical Indonesian costume, consisting of a long *batiked* cotton folded around the body as a skirt, and a long sleeved lace jaquet or overblouse, had lost its appeal to Europeans." In the early 1900s, Catenius-van der Meijden had already warned her readers not to wear *sarong* and *kebaya* on board ship. Married women were only allowed to wear them in the Indies at home in the mornings. The more expensive *sarong* and *kebaya* - they could be extremely elaborate and expensive - were *'bon ton'* when receiving (female) morning guests.t? They were also permitted for morning shopping. Some ten years later in her second manual, Catenius-van der Meijden warned that this was no longer an acceptable practice.

In 1914 the *sarong* and kebaya-struggle was still in full swing. The Eurasian author of a popular manual, J. Kloppenburg-Versteegh (1862-1942), born and raised in the Indies as the daughter of a coffee planter.r" admired the *sarong* and *kebaya* as 'the most appropriate dress for our ladies in the Indies [...] elegant clothing, provided that one knows how to wear it'.[31] She tried to popularise this costume by providing a sewing pattern in her book. However, Beata van He1sdingen-Schoevers (1886-1920), who was Eurasian as well but a generation younger, detested this outfit. She considered it a 'bad habit not to dress up, to saunter in a peignoir or even in a sarong and kebaya'.[32]

Mrs. J. Kloppenburg-Versteegh in *sarong* and *kebaya*, (Call. Vilan van de Loo).

The fashion changes in the Indies can be partly attributed to changes in Western fashions.f Compared to the long dresses fashionable in the West in 1900, which were held up by tight corselets, the loose-fitting *sarong* and *kebaya* were comfortable and easy to wear. But the short summer dresses oflinen and cotton which were fashionable in the 1920S provided a costume appropriate to the tropics, guaranteeing coolness and freedom of movement – even better than the *sarong* and *kebaya.* A more important reason for the rejection of the *sarong* and *kebaya* was its 'indigenous' nature. Beata van Helsdingen-Schoevers mentioned the rejection of this 'unnecessary' dress in the same breath as 'sports' as a preventive remedy for the danger of 'going native' *(verindischen).* Thus, fear of *verindischen* was responsible for the rejection of the *sarong* and *kebaya*.

By 1920 the *sarong* and *kebaya* were a thing of the past and were mostly worn by a few European women in rural areas or maybe the horne.w By the 1930S it

A group of Indo-Europeans, women in *bébé*-dresses at an ouring, 1910 (KITLV, Leiden)

was completely 'out',35 Even as early as around 1900 their popularity was not uncontested, as they had to compete with simple, straight, and plain, so-called 'reform clothing' and *bébé* dresses: wide, white, shapeless, and long-sleeved, with frills and ruches. The *bébé* dresses had a short life. In the 19IOS, women of the higher classes frowned upon this frumpy 'provincial' outfit.t" By the 1920S, *bébé* dresses were considered 'uglier than decently embroidered night-gowns, which immediately got wrinkled and were difficult to iron'.37

From the beginning of the twentieth century European fashions began gaining in popularity. As early as 1908, the luxuriousness of European dress was being mentioned. At receptions and visits, blouses and skirts were being replaced by fashionable dresses from Europe.t" Gloves and hats were now part of the attire of newcomers for official visits and at daytime festivities. A hat might protect against the sun, but it was also an emblem of social standing. In the 1920S, despite the tropical heat, even velvet hats and fur collars could be seen in the cities.t? Shorter European summer dresses became fashionable in that decade. As Rutten-Pekelharing advised, the tropical outfit should first and foremost be cool and loose. However, strong perspiration might necessitate flannel underwear. Because of the necessity of regular changing (twice a day) and local washing habits, the outfit also had to be easy to wash, well-sewn and - compared

to the Dutch style - relatively large. White - stockings and shoes included – was for everyday wear, but white was not considered really well-dressed. In the 1920S and 1930S, female clothing had thus become completely Westernised. It was a permanent summer collection of European fashion. But how did an individual acquire these dresses that were prescribed by collective European tastes?

SHOPPING, SEWING AND THEJAHIT

At the end of the nineteenth century, Dutch women departing for the Indies bought their outfits in the Netherlands, in shops that specialised in tropical clothing such as *Gerzons Modemagazijnen* (Gerzon's Fashion Stores) and *De Bijenkorf*.[40] Even *sarong* and *kebaya* could be bought in Holland, although their purchase in the Indies was advised. 'The *kebaya,* bought expensively in Holland, look foolish when worn in the Indies'." By 1908, Catenius-van der Meijden was warning women not to take along too much, since one could find *'everything,* as cheap as, if not *cheaper* than, in the beloved motherland'<'

In the Indies, mail-order businesses provided the European public abroad with its dearest and most expensive wishes from Europe. But one needed patience; in 1914a delivery could still take up to four months.f The modernisation of colonial life eased this problem for the majority of European urban women. Fashion stores were established in the cities, either of Indies origin or as branches of a European store. The well-known Dutch fashion store *Gerzons* for instance, started a mail-order service in 1922, and opened centres in Batavia and Surabaya in 1933, and in the following years in Bandung and Medan.

These Gerzon's branches illustrated the *'totokisation'* of Indies society. They were a Dutch fashion venture in the tropics under the strict control of the Amsterdam headquarters. Store managers and sales personnel were sent from the Netherlands; only the lowest paid employees were Indonesian. Prices were also set by the Amsterdam office. The clothing and confectionary items were ordered in Amsterdam and came from European capitals such as Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin, London, and Zurich. Just before the Second World War, American ready-to-wear fashion became very popular among the Indies clientele, who were famous for being 'very difficult'.

Gerzon's clientele consisted partly of Indies-born, and partly of *totok* women from the European upper-classes - including the wife of the Governor General, the first lady of the Indies. As an internal report of Gerzon's stated, not without smugness, in 1941: 'Only the higher classes can buy here, since we offer only a better kind of clothing'.44 Between 1933 and 1936, Gerzon's doubled its sales, a result of the ongoing commercialisation of modern clothing. Shops like

Jahit, seamstress, Central java, no year (KITLV, Leiden),

Gerzon's also profited from the rapidly changing consumer demand in Europe - these new trends were easy to keep up with in the Indies via the growing number of fashion journals and women's pages in daily newspapers.

The clothing of many colonial European women, however, was made at home. The women either sewed their own clothes or had them made by their Indonesian seamstresses, the *jabit (djait* in colonial literature). Sewing, or at least the cutting of patterns, was a required skill for European women going to the Indies, if only to supervise the work of others. The manuals are unanimous on this point. Sewing was also part of the curriculum of the Colonial School for Girls and Women. Some women made it their hobby and pastime. Materials, such as cotton, silk, and shantung, could be found cheaply in the Indian-run Toko Bombay or in the Japanese shcps."

The *jabit* fashioned these clothes or mended the worn ones. She was at the fringe of the crew of servants who made life for European women in the Indies relatively easy. The *jabit* rarely lived in the servants quarters, but would come in from her own house at seven o'clock in the morning. She was often praised for her precision and diligence. In 1936 the Association for Housewives in the Indies engaged a number of *jabit* to serve its members, with the aim of creating a more efficient European household. The association also offered a sewing pattern service for home-made clothing, thus broadening the possibilities for sewing at home.[46]

European women were thus dependent on the *jabit* for their clothing. The *jabit* belonged to a tradition of clothing sewn in the home. Her position illustrated similar class hierarchies as found in Europe where well-to-do women could afford private seamstresses. Relatively rare in Europe, seamstresses were common in the Indies, where class differences were expressed in race relations.

Patterns and designs were European. Oriental influences from China and the Middle East had been part of European fashion since the seventeenth century.v In the Indies, however, the Japanese kimono was the only garment permitted to offer some Oriental fragrance. The Japanese kimono had gained popularity in Europe after Japan had been opened to the West in the late nineteenth century, and was quickly integrated into clothing production in both Europe and the Indies. But the kimono was an exception. Before '940, Javanese fabrics were apparently not used for European clothing either. They might adorn European houses as a wall or table decoration, but they were not mentioned as being used to make clothing. Oriental elements could be included in fashion, so long as they were 'exotic' - for example, the kimono or wide-sleeved Turkish blouses. Java was too close by to become 'exotic'. It was not

}ahit with her sowing machine on the back gallery, Batavia, ca. 1915 (KITLV, Leiden).

until the late 1960s that Oriental influences (patterns, fabrics, and designs) would gain a regular place in the European and American fashion industries.

The colonial preference for European fabrics and patterns was part of 'modernisation'. Wearing Javanese clothing was not consistent with the self-inflicted task of European women to be modern and bring modernity to the indigenous population.P However, a more influential motive behind this preference was the fear of 'going native'. It influenced the basic Westernisation of fashion and fabrics. We may draw a parallel between this fear of indigenous influence on Western clothing in the Indies and the more recent fear in the West of the feminisation of male fashion. As Barthes pointed out in his study of the fashion and its ideology of the *late 19505:*

> *Feminine clothing can absorb nearly all masculine clothing, which is content to "reject" certain features of feminine clothing [...]: there is a social prohibition against the feminisation of men, while there is almost none against the masculinisation of women.* [49]

A similar social prohibition against the 'Orientalisation' of Western fashions in the East manifested itself in Dutch colonial culture. As early as 1908, before the disappearance of the *sarong* and *kebaya*, Catenius-van der Meijden had announced:

> *If one acted sensibly, one might adopt the costume of the natives. This is not in keeping with our Western civilisation and rightly so. A European cannot dress like a coolie [...] even if his attire is of the finest linen*[50]

Western clothing thus expressed difference and distance to the local surrounding. Maintaining distance from the indigenous culture was also expressed in prescriptions regarding the cleaning of European clothing, which - as mentioned earlier - had to be washed separately from servants' clothing. The treatment of clothing, as well as clothing itself, had its own set of taboos related to social-racial differences. European attitudes towards clothing and cleanliness expressed a fear of "pollution', literally as well as in the symbolic sense. The anthropologist Mary Douglas has defined (religious) pollution taboos as a social phenomenon preventing intrusion into, or deviation from, the prescribed social order.[52] The Indies social order was defined along hierarchical racial lines. Taboos related to fashion and fabrics, clothing and cleanliness, marked and reinforced this order.

THE ILLUSION OF WESTERNISATION

The tendency of Europeans to look to the West and to separate themselves from their Asian surroundings is evident from journals and other publications on women's fashion from the years between the two World Wars. By the nineteenth century, Paris had become the Mecca for Indies fashion, as noted by novelists such as P.A. Daum. It seems to have been the custom of well-to-do Europeans to visit this city (to buy clothes) when on extended leave in Europe. Paris remained the leading influence in colonial fashion in the Indies until the German occupation of France in 1940, although by the 1920s and 1930s glossy magazines featuring glamorous American film stars had begun to rival French fashion publications.

DE LAATSTE PARIJSCHE MODES.

Naar teekeningen, speciaal voor het *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* door Mme A. Croïs—Homan i des Heide
De teekeningen zijn te e inge naar de modellen van bekende Fransche modehuizen

VOOR DE MORGEN WANDELING.

In de Fransche Bladen begint een soort campagne tegen de tegenwoordige, al te simple mode: de rechtelijn, zegt men, is niet geschikt om de vrouwelijke figuur te doen uitkomen. En toch blijft deze rechtelijn nog altijd „de rigueur." Waarom? omdat zij de merkwaardige eigenschap bezit iedere vrouw jong en slank te maken!

En bovendien, al is de groote lijn ook wat eentonig, men kan zijn smaak en fantasie botvieren in de kleine bijkomstigheden, die tegenwoordig een van de voornaamste deelen van 't toilet vormen. Hierover een andere keer uitvoeriger.

Hierbij twee van die zoo „afgekeurde" rechte japonnetjes! Het linksche is van Worth, een echt voorjaarstoiletje van crêpe de-chine. Het andere is een petite Robe van Jean Patou van grijze kasha, versierd met stolp-plooien van een andere stof met een grijs-en-roode streep.

VOOR DEN AVOND.

Voor de avond-toilettes weer veel kant gebr i. Hier twee voorbeelden. Het linksche is een toilet " a jean ratou. Het is van biscuit-kleurige „Chine-crêpe." Met een ba···erolering en ingezette punten van oude kant. Een smal randje skunus van onder en twee kleine juweeltjes geapjes op de schouders ken dit buitengewoon gedistingeerd toiletje „af." Het rechtsche is een zijn toilet van Redfern. Het is 1 stiverkant op een onderkleed van rookkleurige zijde. Om de heupen slingert een lak van zijden rozen: alweer een bewijs hoe de kunstbloemen weer „en vogue" komen.

From a women's page: The latest Paris fashion. *Batauiaascb Nieuwsblad*, March 14, 1925.

The West continued to draw closer to the expanding group of *totok* women. Mter the First World War nearly every European daily newspaper (written in Dutch for a predominantly European public) began to feature a women's page. By around 1930 every respectable newspaper provided a women's page in their Friday or Saturday editions. The latest Parisian shows (*Java-Bode*) were covered, Parisian letters were published; even a 'Parisian Chronicle' *(Bataviaasch Nieutosblad)* straight from the French capital could be savoured.

European fashion was of the utmost importance to European women in the Indies. In 1939. at the request of its members, the Association for Housewives in North Sumatra enlarged the selection of its circulating library to include more fashion magazines. Fifteen of the 34 magazines were fashion magazines *(Jardin des Modes, Modes et Travaux, Vogue,* as well as German and British magazines), while others like *Libel/e, Marie Claire* and *Ladies Home [ournal* included some discussion of fashion.[54] The magazines illustrated the fluctuating nature of fashion. A European reader explained this growing interest as, first and foremost, a nostalgic alternative to going shopping in a European

city.[55] Furthermore, familiarity with current designs was necessary in order to choose patterns and styles for sewing one's own dresses. Choosing a dress from a magazine was far more difficult than trying on ready-to-wear clothes in the fitting room of a European department store.[56]

'Long reclining figures' and an advertisment for Hotel Trètès as 'Holland in the East' and under new European management, *De Mode Revue*, 11, Nov. 1934.

OCHTEND-TAILLEUR.
Van tweed of wollen fantaisie tot is het mantelpak voor den ochtend: eenvoudig van coupe, met ruimen rok.

A woolen coat and *skirt, Java-Bode.* July n, 1930.

Fashion reports in the women's pages of the daily newspapers were *selections* of what was considered to be of interest to women in the colony. The reports embodied the characteristics of fashion so aptly described by Barthes in the 1950S; timeless, placeless fashion pages represented female readers and their dreams: women without sorrows or problems, beaming and beautiful, banishing 'anything aesthetically or morally displeasing':

> *Fashion places the Woman to whom and about whom it is speaking in a state of innocence, where everything is for the best, in the best of all possible worlds: there is a law of fashion euphoria.*[57]

This was certainly true for the Indies fashion pages, which presented elongated, pencil-thin women, slightly reclining in their beautiful adornments, which was without doubt a strong contrast to the 'most usual' size 44 of Dutch women in the Indies.[58]

The illusory nature of these fashion columns can tell us something about the dreams of the women in the Indies. The selection made by editors and publishers must have represented, both directly and indirectly, the wishes of their readers, otherwise potential customers would have lost interest and changed to competing journals. The journals were aimed at a leisure class community with Europe-centred inclinations. During the decades between the two World Wars, the focus was on evening dress and afternoon clothing. A picture of a woman's woollen suit was even featured.[59] Clothing for work was apparently less relevant, while the motherhood ideals were served through patterns of children's wear. Only towards the end of the '930S were shorts included. These preferences revealed the main preoccupations of the colonial community, where working women were rarely encountered and socialising was an important part of daily life.

Europe was the main information source. In the early 1930S, the women's pages *ofthe Java-Bodewere* beyond time and place; they had no particular setting and did not refer to the Indies at all. The monthly journals *De Huisvrouw in Indie* and *De Huisvrouw in Deli* (as of 1937 *De Huisvrouw in Noord-Sumatra),* which also paid attention to European clothing and fashion, were slightly more practical but were also Eurocentric. They informed their readers about appropriate clothing for 'taking a breath of fresh air', a holiday in the mountains of Java, and adviced on the perfect outfit for when returning to Europe. They even reported on the latest rage: the revival of the hand muff, more an example of nostalgia for the metropole than a vital clothing accessory for those living in the tropical Indies[60]

Apparently, dressing well was important for European women in the colonies, as recent interviews with former *totok* women suggest.[61] Dress served as a social barometer. One had to know what to wear, when, and how. In the '930S, hierarchy was implicit in decisions made about clothing. The wife of a young civil servant of lower rank could not appear better dressed than the wife of his superior. The former could not reveal that she had recently arrived from Europe and show off the latest fashion, thereby emphasising that the older woman, as a long-standing resident, was out of touch with fashion.[62] The young wife of a civil servant had to allow her bathing suits to be inspected by the wife of her husband's superior for a critical evaluation of its length.[63] For women, social patterns linked to status and precedence were a way of life.

Clothing added to the 'incorporated' character of these women, who had to behave according to the rank of their husbands within a social structure based on hierarchy and superiority.

During the 1920S and 1930S, the fear of *oerindlscben* among *totok* women gradually diminished. The women's pages of dailies and manuals, now written by *totok* women themselves, were silent on this topic. At most they warned against sinking into a mental and intellectual torpor, as a consequence of the heat and the lack of intellectual challenges. v' There was no longer any direct reason to be afraid of going native, because European culture had firmly taken root.[65]

As signals of modernity, dress and fashion contributed to a process of Westernisation in which European women took an active part. Women's pages in Dutch newspapers presented a female identity based on a Western image. This identity, which had evolved in a setting of ballrooms and outings, had its counterpart in the now professionalised household, acclaiming modern motherhood, and other areas of female activity. Dutch women copied organisational structures originating in the metropole and European women became more visible in the public sphere. **In** 1930 the Dutch East-Indies Society for Philanthropy and Social Work was founded; it opened a School for Social Work in Surabaya in 1933. In 1931, Indo-European women formed a separate

European women in white, size 44 (Call. KITLV, Leiden).

branch of the Indo-European Alliance, the *Indo-Europeesch Verbond-Vrouwen Organisatie* (IEV-VO, Indo-European Alliance Women's Organisation). Its goal was 'the social, moral, intellectual and economic development of the European woman' in the Indies through social work. In that same year a School of Home Economics was founded, as well as the *Vereeniging voor Huisvrouwen in Indie* (the Association for Housewives in the Indies), a result of economic pressure on European households during the Depression.P?

All these associations shared a common view of women, emphasising their 'feminine qualities' as 'housewives, wives, and mothers'.'? The goal of The Association for Housewives, for instance, was to create a platform for housewives and to enhance the status and practice of housekeeping. The Association was explicitly open to members of all population groups. *Priyayi* (Javanese elite) women who took part in the organisation, were, however, a very small minority among the more than 10,000 members just before the Second World War. Hence, the tone of the publications of the association remained thoroughly European and maintained a decidedly apolitical stance, as the association abhorred from politics.P"

These organisations, schools, and journals for European women were part of an ongoing process of modernisation in colonial society, which included parts of the Indonesian elite. European culture in the Indies grew and followed its own urge for modernity. The colonial culture acquired a European outlook and strove to become like the metropole *(concordantie).* The women's organisations illustrate how the European elite closed itself off and distanced itself from its local surroundings. The participation of Indonesian women in these developments remained restricted to a small group of *priyayi* women. In the 1930s, Indonesian women's organisations, which did not allow Europeans to be members, formulated their own demands in regard to social and political issues.[69] Chinese women did the same. Women of various population groups went their own organisational way, separate and unequal.

EUROPEAN FOOD

Food preferences and cooking practices followed a similar pattern of *'totokisation'*. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, rice had been the staple food in the diet of Europeans living in the Indies.?" The 'rice table' *(rijsttafe/)* with its many additional dishes had been enthusiastically described in Dutch colonial fiction.?' Household manuals of the 1900s and 1910s, written by Indo-European women, provided the reader with Indonesian recipes. In 1919, the 'rice table' was still considered the main meal of the day for well-to-do Euro-

European woman behind a modern gas stove, still wearing *sarong* and *kebaya*, ca. 1925 (KIT, Amsterdam).

peans. Poorer Europeans as well as the indigenous population ate meals of rice three times a day.[72]

However, even in 1900, European cuisine was already valued more highly than Indies cuisine, and at official dinner parties European dishes were served" In the 1920S and 1930S, the 'rice table' was relegated to Sundays. During the week, European dishes such as chicken and apple sauce, red cabbage, and sauerkraut, constituted the typical *totok* menu. This development was made possible by growing imports of canned food and by increased vegetable cultivation in the higher regions of Java (Bandung, Malang). The magazine *De Huisvrouw in Indie* furthered this development by providing its readers with European recipes. During the Depression, it also published price lists of food

articles to assist household budgeting and to keep the expenses of the *kokki* (cook) within limits.

European housewives did not do the cooking themselves. At most they occasionally made something special *(kokkerellen)* such as a cake or a special Dutch dessert for their husbands.> As an otherwise progressive lady wrote in 1932, 'it is not easy to stand before a glowing charcoal fire, when the afternoon temperature is 85 to 95 degrees Fahrenheit:" She did not question how her *kokki* must have felt. It was the *kokki,* after all, who prepared the meals on charcoal fires, or, in the 1920s and 1930s in the cities, on gas burners.

The *kokki* had no professional education; she was trained on the spot and was valued for her skills. Having an able *kokki* was a valuable asset to European households. In the 1930S, the Association for Housewives organised cooking courses on 'the European menu' for indigenous kokki,76 another indication of the *'totokisation'* and 'professionalisation' processes of colonial modernity.

The *kokki* bought the meals' ingredients on her daily visit to the market and received the rest from her mistress during the daily distribution of provisions from the provision store (*gudang*). According to older manuals, the *kokki* and the other servants would get their own rice to cook in their own part of the house (this is not mentioned in manuals of the years between the two World Wars). Eating from the same dishes as their masters was not allowed. As in washing the clothes, a 'distancing' and the fear of 'pollution' determined the behavioural norms of food preparation and consumption. Yet, the paradoxical contrast between this 'distancing' and the actual preparation of the food by Indonesians - which pertained directly to the body -- was never made explicit.[77]

Food habits seem to be among the most enduring cultural behaviour patterns of mankind.Z" Thus it is not surprising that Europeans kept to their own menu. Promoted in the same way as European fashion in newspaper dailies and women's journals, European cooking remained the general trend among *totok* families until the disappearance of European lifestyles during the Japanese occupation.Z?

IN THE SHADOW OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In the areas of fashion and clothing, attention remained focused on Europe until 1942. Mter the German occupation of France and Holland in May 1940, Indies journals were able to follow fashion trends by turning to London and the United States, which became the main centres of fashion for the unoccupied regions.f" These were boom years for fashion houses in the Indies, which sprang up like mushrooms. Gerzon's, for instance, enjoyed a new autonomy,

freed from Amsterdam's management and harassment." Ready-to-wear clothingwas now imported from the United States.

The women's pages of the Indies newspapers had changed as well. In 1941, they had lost their timeless and placeless character. For instance, the Semarang daily *De Locomotief* dropped its women's page 'De vrouw en haar huis' (Woman and her home'), and integrated it into its other pages. In 1941 the paper published articles about Balinese children's drawings, the significance of Islamic fasting or *Puasa*, Indonesian servants, changes in Kartini schools, the work of the Central Commission for the Organisation of Female Labour During the Mobilisation *(Centrale Commissie tot Organisatie van Vrouwienarbeid in Mobilisatietijd*, CQVIM).82 Papers like the *Bataviaascb Nieuwsblad* reminded female readers of their duty in regard to mobilisation, thus working hand-in-hand with the government in strengthening public morale.

Increased interest in Indonesian culture was also expressed in clothing. On December 9, 1941, two days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, *De Locomotief* reported the latest novelty in fashion in Batavia, Chinese girls from Singapore modelling dresses made from Indonesian cloth. Although such a

Chinese girls from Singapore demonstrate the latest in ladies fashions: dress made from Indonesian (batik) cloth. *De Locomotief*, September 12, 1941.

report remained an exception, it was a response to a growing political sensitivity among Europeans to the country they were living in, at a time when connections with Europe were being broken. On the one hand, the war in Europe focused European attention on that part of the world; European newspapers monitored war events closely.[8] On the other hand, the broken connection with the Netherlands and new defence needs influenced new ideas of an 'Indies citizenship' - a vague notion of belonging to the Indies without direct administrative consequences.[9] This new political awareness was also expressed in the struggle by women for the right to vote in city council elections - which was finally won in September '94' for women of all population groups (Europeans, Foreign Orientals, and Indigenous) ifliterate and with an income of 300 guilders.[10]

The pages of the dailies testified to these changes, while at the same time covering European fashions from London. But it would require the hardships of the Pacific theatre of the Second World War before European women would wear a *sarong* again, or clothing made from Indonesian textiles.[11]

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Colonial fashions and food preferences both reflected, and were instrumental in, the changes that took place in colonial society in the Netherlands Indies between the end of the nineteenth century and '942. Clothing changed from long to short, from heavy to light, from dark to white, from *sarong* and *kebaya* to matching skirt and jacket. The European diet moved away from rice as the staple to a European menu and canned food. The 'rice table' came to be reserved for Sundays. Fashion changes reflected a growing focus on Europe (Paris) - and later the United States - as well as the growth of a European community and the 'victory' of Westernisation (which was strongest in areas relating to the body). The European self-image in general did not permit the intrusion of Oriental influences. European women, whether *totok* or Eurasian, used to dress in (white) summer clothing or in formal evening dress to display their rank and superiority. Eventually *totok* women became the trend-setters; they belonged to the establishment which defined the social order and kept Indonesian society at a distance - out of fear of 'pollution'.

In line with this Westernisation, educated *totok* women took over from Indo-European women as 'teachers' of the colonial lifestyle in the Indies. Learning by practice in the Indies was replaced by preparing oneself for life in the colony at the Colonial School for Girls and Women in The Hague. Western gender roles prevailed. European women in the Indies created an

infrastructure supporting their ascribed tasks of mother and (house)wife, which included schools of home economics and social work, women's pages in newspapers, associations of housewives, and philanthropy. All were consistent with the defined female role. It was a role that European women shared with Indonesian women, but carried out differently: they did not work the fields to earn a family income, they stayed home to supervise the work of others.[87]

Were these European women 'the ruin of empire' or were they the builders of it, as claimed by female authors of domestic manuals? The answer depends on our time perspective, There is no evidence that European women used clothing or food to challenge or undermine colonial authority. As 'incorporated wives' they reinforced Dutch colonial identity, as revealed by their clothing and food preferences. They followed their husbands and behaved according to generally accepted standards for European women. Through Western institutions like women's organisations and training institutes they reinforced European traditions. By claiming citizenship in the colonial state through their struggle to gain the right to vote, they also expressed their wish to be politically involved in the Dutch colonial project. They were part of, and participated in, a broader process of modernity, living in the East but looking to the West. In all these respects, they strengthened colonialism and empire itself

However, it was this process of Westernisation - and Indonesian nationalism as a reaction to it - that brought colonialism to an unexpected end. Indonesian nationalism, precipitated by the Japanese victory and Japanese occupation, challenged Dutch *'totokisation'* and brought about its downfall after r945. Living with the illusion of permanence, European women had not realised the phantasmagoric nature of their position in the Indies. By strengthening Dutch colonialism, these women, like their husbands, were instrumental in 'ruining the empire',

Notes

Claudia Knapman, *White Women in Fiji, I8JS-I9Jo. The Ruin of Empire?* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1986); Beverley Gartrell, 'Colonial Wives: Villains or Victims?', in: H. Callan and S. Ardener eds., *The Incorporated Wife* (London: Croom Helm, 1984) 165.

2 Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel eds., *Western Women and Imperialism; Complicity and Resistance* (BloomingtonlIndianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992); Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History. Britsh Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture* (Chapel Hill/London: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); janice N.

Brownfoot, 'Memsahibs in Colonial Malaya. A Study of European Wives in a British Colony and Protectorate 19°0-1940', in: H. Callan and S. Ardener eds., *The Incorporated Wife* (London: Croom Helm, 1984) 187-212; Helen Callaway, *Gender, Culture and Empire. European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (Houndsmill, Basingsroke/London: Macmillan Press, 1987); Gartrell, 'Colonial wives', 165-186.

3 At most, it is argued, some women might be more prone to etiquette and gossip because of their life of leisure and idleness, prescribed by men who did not want their wives to work or to busy themselves in philanthropy; Gartrell, 'Colonial Wives'. Others have denied even this and come up with interesting psychological explanations of these charges; Callaway, *Gender, Culture and Empire*.

4 See chapter 3.

5 Christine Doran, 'White Women in Colonial Contexts. Villains, Victims and/or Vitiators of Imperialism?', in: Harry A. Poeze and Antoinette Liem eds., *Lasting Fascinations. Essays on Indonesia and the Southwest Pacific to Honour Bob Hering* (Stein, Yayasan Soekarno Monograph Series, 1998) 99-n6.

6 Jennifer Craik, *The Face of Fashion. Cultural Studies in Fashion* (LondonlNew York: Routledge, 1994) 5·

7 See chapter 3.

8 *Volkstelling I930. VI. Europeanen in Nederlandsch-lndie* (Batavia: Landsrukkerij, 1933) 30.

9].A.A. van Doom, *De laatste eeuw van Indie. Ontwikkeling en ondergang van ern koloniaal project* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1994) 43.

IQ *Volkstelling I930. VI.* 21; *Volkstelling I930. VIII Overzicht voor Nederiandscb-Indie* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936) 3.

11 Batavia, Bandung, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, and Surabaya - where a total of 100,000 Europeans lived.

12 As a result, the number of mixed marriages (marriages of European men to Chinese or indigenous women) rose between 1900 and 1925 from 13 percent to 27.5 percent of all marriages by Europeans in the Indies, but had declined by 1940 to 20 percent. See A. van Marle, 'De Europeanen in Nederlands-Indie. lets over ontstaan en *groei',Indonesie* 5 (1951-1952) 322; *Volkstelling I930· VIII,25-26.*

13 *Volkstelling I930· VI,* 96, IQI; *Volkstelling I9JO. VIII,* 122-125.

14 H. van der Spek-van Santen, 'De alleenstaande vrouw in Indie', in: M.A.E. van Lith-van Schreven and].H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp eds., *Indisch Vrouuxnjaarboek I936* (Jogjakarta: Kolff-Buning, 1936); Ems I.H. van Soest, *De Hollandsche vrouw in Indie* (Deventer: Van Hoeve, n.d.); C.H. Razoux Schultz-Metzer, 'De werkende vrouw', in: C.W. Wormser ed., Z66 *leoen wij in Indic* (and imprint; Deventer: Van Hoeve, 1943); Esther Captain and Annelies van der Schatte *Olivier,Indie, een verre oorlogvan nabij: Herinneringen van vrouwen in bezet Nederkmds-Indii* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1995) 109, 128,152.

15 Since 1.5 percent of these married European women with a profession were also heads of the household and wage earners, 4 percent of the married professional women were double-income earners.

16 Henk van Dijk, 'De Hollandse vrouw in Indie', in: Wim Hoogbergen and Marjo de Thije eds., *Vruchtbaar onderzoek. Essays ter ere van Douwe]ongmans*. ICAU-Mededelingen 24 (Utrecht: lnstituut voor Culturele Antropologie, Universiteit van Utrecht, 1986) 59-60.

17 Hilary Callan, 'Introduction', in: H. Callan and S. Ardener eds., *The Incorporated Wift* (London: Croom Helm, 1984) 1-26.

18 Van Doom, *De laatste eeuw van Indie, 45.*

19 J.M.]. Catenius-van der Meijden, *Naar Indii en terug. Gids voor het gezin. Speciaal een vraagbaak voor dames* (Den Haag: Veenstra, n.d.) 31.

20 See chapter 3.

21 Vilan van de Loo, "Iobben in Indie.Wijze vriendinnen adviseren Hollandse vrouwen', *Indische Letteren* 9 (1994)67-80; Sanderella Plak, 'Van sarong en kabaya naar mantelpak; De rol van Europese vrouwen in Indie van *1900* tot 1942' (Unpublished M.A. thesis Department of Political, Social and Cultural Sciences, University of Amsterdam, 1993).

22 Chapter 3; Van de Loo, *Tobben in Indii.*

23 Ann Laura Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable. The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in aoth Century Colonial Cultures' in: Jan Breman ed., *Imperial Monkey Business. Racial Supremacy in Social Darwinist Theory and Colonial Practice* (Amsterdam: CASAIVU University Press, *1990).*

24 Elvire Spier, *De maan op het water* (Cadier en Keer: 60 plus, 1993) 120.

25 See also chapter 3.

26 Catenius-van der Meijden, *Naar Indii en terug,* 2-3.

27 C.]. Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken? Wat moet ik doen? Wenken voor het Hollandsche meisje dat naar Indii gaat.* (Second imprint; Gorinchem: Noorduyn, 1927) 10-11.

28 For a history of Indonesian dress see Jean Gelman Taylor; 'Costume and Gender in Colonial Java', in: Henk Schulte Nordholt ed., *Outward Appearances. Dressing State and Society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997)85-n6.

29 Carenius-van der Meijden, *Naar Indii en terug,* 6, 25.

30 For biographical data on the authors of domestic manuals, see Vilan van de Loo, 'Tobben in Indie; Een analyse van vijflevensgidsen uit de periode 1908-1932, geschreven voor Nederlandse vrouwen die naar Indie emigreerden' (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Dutch Language and Literature, University of Leiden, 1993).

31 J. Kloppenburg-Versteegh, *Het leven van de Europeesche vrouw in Indie* (Deventer: Dixon, 1913) 12.

32 B.van Helsdingen-Schoevers. *De Europeesche vrouw in Indie* (Baarn: Hollandia, 1914) 39.

33 Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils, *Tropenecht. Indische en Europese kleding in Nederlands-Indie* (Den Haag: Tong Tong, 1996).

34 Rutren-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken? 6.*

35 C. Swaan-Koopman, *Vrouwen in Indie(Amsterdam:* Paris, 1932)) does not even mention it.

36 Marie C. van Zeggelen, *Dona Alve* (Amsterdam: Scheltema en Holkema, 1928).

37 Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan mod ik denken? 6.*

38 This greater luxury had its price. According to Catenius the costs to uphold outward appearance in more luxurious dresses had influenced the traditional Indies hospitality in a negative way.J.M.]. Catenius-van der Meijden, *Ons huis in Indu* (Semarang: Masman en Stroink, 1908) 102.

39 Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denkent r:*

40 Bronkhorst and Wits, *Tropenecht.*

41 Catenius-van der Meijdcn, *Naar Indie en terug, 6.*

42 Catenius-van der Meijden, *Ons huis in Indii, 102.*

43 Van Helsdingen-Schoevers, *De Europeeschevrouw in Indie, 40.*

44 *'Alléén het betere publiek kan bi} ons kopen, daar wij alleen het betere genre verkopen.'* Municipal Archive Amsterdam no. 539, Gerzon's Modemagazijnen NV no. *470,* 'Verslag van oprichting, wezen en bestaan der afdeling mailorders, resp. afdeling Indie, 17-3-1941'.

45 Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken?* 8, reports prices of 60 cents for a metre of silk prior to 1914.

46 In 1939 they employed *35jahit,* a few of whom were also able to cut patterns. *De Huisvrouw in Indih936,* 699; 1937, 661; 1939, 618.

47 Richard Martin and Harold Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress* (New York: Abrams I995).

48 Swaan-Koopman, *Vrouwen in Indie,* 97-100.

49 Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System* (rst imprint 1967; New York: Hill and Wang, 1984) 257·

50 Catenius-van der Meijden, *Ons huis in Indid, 73.*

51 Madelon Szekely-Lulofs, *Gnze bedienden in Indie* (Deventer: Van Hoeve, n.d.) 42.

52 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (LondonlNew York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

53 Carenius-van der Meijden, *Naar Indit en terug, 387.*

54 'Damesleestrommel', *De Huisvrouw in Noord-Sumatra* 8-1 (1939) 8.

55 Differences between female city dwellers on Java and planters' wives elsewhere could not be found. There are also no differences between the journals *De Huisvrouw in Indii* (Batavia) and *De Huisvrouw in Noord-Sumatra* (Medan).

56 Nan Rutten, 'Over modeplaten', *De Huisvrouw in Noord-Sumatra* 8-3 (1939) 109.

57 Barthes, *The Fashion System, 261.*

58 'Kniples', *De Huisvrouw in De/i,* 4-3 (1935) 277·

59 *[aoa-Bode,* 11-7-1930.

60 *De Huisvrouw in Indie,* 1939, 211.

61 Plak, 'Van sarong en kabaya naar mantelpak'.

62 Plak, 'Van sarong en kabaya naar mantelpak', 82-3.

63 Captain and Van der Schatte Olivier, *Indie, een verre oor/ogvan nabiJ, 395*

64 Swaan-Koopman, *Vrouwen in Indis.* 13-20.

65 This holds true as far as fashion and the household are concerned. The fear of *verindischen* of poor Indo-Europeans did not decline. It was one of the incentives for private welfare for the European poor during the economic crisis of the 1930S.

66 C.H. Razoux Schultz-Metzer, 'LE.V. Vrouwen-Organisatie', in: M.A.E. van Lith-van Schrcven and J.H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp eds., *Indiscb Vrouwenjaarboek I936* (Jogjakarta: Kolff-Buning, 1936) 2; T. Eckenhausen-Tetzner, 'De huisvrouwenvereenigingen in Indie', in: M.A.E. van Lith-van Schreven and J.H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp eds., *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek I936* (Jogjakarta: Kolff-Buning, 1936) 5-9. It started twenty years later than its Dutch counterpart.

67 N. Kosters, 'De opleiding der vrouw voor socialen arbeid', in: M.A.E, van Lith-van Schreven and J.H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp eds., *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek I936* (Jogjakarta: Kolff-Buning, '936) 24-25.

68 See chapter 5.

69 See the chapters 5 and 6; C. Vreede-de Stuers, *Lemancipaiion de laftmme Indonesienne* (Paris/The Hague: Mouton, 1959).

70 VOC (Dutch East-Indian Company) officials believed that hot rice was bad for the brain and could cause blindness. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, rice was eaten at breakfast as porridge. In 1844 a traveller considered the consumption of rice 'a bad habit' *('tot den minder goeden toon')*, and potatoes from the Netherlands were advertised in Batavia (F. de Haan, *Oud Batavia* (2 vols.; Batavia: Kolff, 1922) I1, 126-8.

71 justus van Maurik, *Indrukken van een 'Totok'. Indische typen en scbetsen* (Amsterdam: Van Hoeve, 1897) 7-8.

72 'Rijsttafel', *Encydopaedie van Nederiandsch-Indii.* (10 vols.; 's-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, Leiden: Brill, '9'9) Ill, 666-667·

73 Plak, 'Van sarong en kabaya naar mantelpak', 71.

74 Szekely-Lulofs, *Onze bedienden in Indie.*

75 Swaan-Koopman, *Vrouwen in Indie.*

76 See chapter 3.

77 That it did not go completely unheeded can be deduced from Dutch colonial fiction, in which the fear of poisoning is a recurring theme.

78 Anneke van Otterloo, *Eten en eetlust in Nederland (I84o-I990). Een historisch-sociologische studie* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1990),

79 In Indo-European families the 'rice table' might remain the daily practice, the European menu a monthly exception (personal communication Mrs van Ree-Razoux Schultz, 9-12-1994). In Japanese detention camps, cooking styles of all kinds, both European and Indonesian, were used.

80 'Londense modehuizen laten zien wat zij kunnen', *De Locomotief* 11-10-1941; 'Britsche *herfstmode', Java-Bode,* 27-9-1941.

81 Municipal Archives Amsterdam no, 539, file 471, 'Reis naar Indie 1947, 2; R.A. Blatt, 'Verslag werkzaamheden', 3. Gerzon's continued after the war and Indonesian independence; it was changed into Wanita Modes in 1954. See also file 472.

82 De Locomotief 30-8-1941.

83 Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'Het moreel van de Europese burgerbevolking in Nederlands-Indie 1936-1941" in: Petra Groen and E11y Touwen Bouwsma eds., *Nederlands-IndieI942. Illusie en ontgoocheling* (Den Haag: Sdu, 1992),

84 P. Drooglever, *De Vaderlandse Club I930-I942, Totoks en de Indische politiek* (Franeker: Wever, 1980) 333-339.

85 See chapter 5,

86 Captain and Van der Schatte Olivier, *Indie.*

87 See chapter 2.

v Feminism, Citizenship and the Struggle for Women's Suffrage in a Colonial Context

INTRODUCTION

The colonial state, which developed in the Netherlands Indies at the turn of the twentieth century, would produce only a fragmented and refractured Western democracy. Representative government, delegation of administrative authoriry to councils, direct participation of the population through representation and political parties, as well as concomitant voting rights were introduced slowly and gradually, depending on the estimated level of education of the population. Colonial democracy was a patchwork of limited rights and extensive regulations, originating in the strident Dutch wish to control political developments among the indigenous population as closely as possible. A mature democracy along Western lines was considered a thing of the future and would not be realised under Dutch rule. Indonesian nationalism would struggle for representative government in the 19105 and would lose interest in the 19208 and '930S; yet, by the end of the '930S and the early '940S it would return with an elaborated blueprint for democratic institutions.

The definition of the colonial citizen proved be a painful process of inclusion and exclusion. To what extent, for instance, did the Dutch colonial government position women as citizens of the colonial state and as full-fledged political participants? How did the determinants of social inequalities, the interdependent categories of race, class and gender affect their space to speak in matters of political activities and their right to vote?' Although colonial citizenship was a non-existent legal category at the time, as I argued in my introduction, the colonial state gradually created 'a grey zone' of practical citizen's rights. Moreover, inhabitants of the colonial state of all population groups claimed these rights and formulated their desires in this respect. This allows us to analyse the struggle for women's suffrage in these terms.

As with the discourse on other subjects in this volume, the struggle for women's suffrage in colonial Indonesia also outlines perceptions of self by Europeans and the construction of 'whiteness' by Dutch women and men.

European perceptions of self and nation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whether male or female, were to a large extent determined and coloured by an awareness of empire, as many authors have outlined before.' In their suffrage struggle, British feminists, for instance, claimed their citizenship as maternal saviours of Indian women and the empire. In what form did European men and women construct images of self and of colonial citizenship in their struggle for the right to vote by women in the Indies? How did they interpret their relation to Indonesian women as eo-citizens? How did Indonesian women themselves formulate their own position with regard to colonial citizenship in this struggle? It is from these questions that this chapter evolves)

As in most Western countries (except for France), women in the Netherlands had won the vote at the end of the First World War, in r9'9.[4] This right was not automatically extended to the Indies. In British India, the vote for women of all racial groups, although limited by property and literacy, was introduced almost at the same time as it was in the United Kingdom - between '920 and '929, albeit only by and for the provincial legislature. Here, an organised women's movement, the Women's Indian Association and other women's groups, supported by nationalist parties (the Muslim League included) and British women's organisations, had put pressure on the government in London to include women in the franchise." In the Netherlands Indies interest in politics among Europeans was almost nonexistent. Although Indonesian feminism developed along with Indonesian nationalism, it did not put the issue on its agenda until the '930S, resulting in their modest victory of '94" the suffrage for the city council's elections. The debates on this issue echoed Western voices, but they were always complicated by the intersecting notions of race, class and gender.

GENDER AND CLASS IN REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS

Indies democracy was a mere shadow of the Dutch model. The first representative bodies, the city councils of 1905, consisted exclusively of nominated European members, with a clear majority being Dutch officials. By '908, only European men, if they were 23 years of age and paying taxes, were granted the right to elect the (male) members of the city councils. Men of the other population groups, Foreign Orientals and NativeslIndonesians, obtained this right in '9'7, although it was limited by property and literacy exigencies. In '925, the right to vote for city councils was extended to all male inhabitants of the Indies, 2' years and older, who paid taxes on a yearly income of 300 guilders and who

were literate in Dutch, Malay, or a local language," Since the census of'930 stated that only 11 percent of the male (and 2 percent of the female population) were literate, just a very small percentage of the male population was involved in political decision making.? While race differences had formally been withdrawn, gender and class criteria were maintained in political representation.f

General direct elections were never held in colonial Indonesia. The city council was the only body to be exclusively elected by the voters. The government nominated a minority of the members for all other councils. All these members - of the local, city, regency and regional councils - functioned as electors of the People's Council *(Volksraad),* installed in '9,8, to which nominated members were also added. In 1939, 2228 members in ro6 councils represented the nearly seventy million inhabitants of colonial Indonesia and elected 37 members to the People's Council. The government selected the other 23 members plus the Dutch chairman." Indonesian interests in the People's Council could count on a slight majority of five members only after '93', because from that year on thirty Indonesians sat besides twenty five Europeans and five Foreign Orientals. The council had limited legislative powers, while it could also be overruled by the Governor General or the Minister in The Hague. Although its public debate of administrative and political issues could be called a step forward and despite the fact that this was the only body where Indonesians could speak with parliamentary immunity, the council was never more than a weak representative institution or an 'official debating club'. The non-cooperation policies of the nationalist movement of the 1920S and early 1930S with their boycott of Dutch councils, did not heighten its popularity among Indonesians. Even in '938, after twenty years of activity, the general public had little idea of its functioning. 10

In view of the limitations of the male franchise, female suffrage would reach an even smaller group. For reason of clarity, the struggle for the right to vote for women can be divided into three phases: the period '908-'925 in which Dutch legislation set the legal boundaries; '925-'937, the years of weak feminist claims and strong refusals of women's suffrage in the Indies; '937-'94', a time of more intense struggle, debate and victory.

The First Phase: 1908-1925

The first phase of this struggle was part of the general battle for the female franchise in the Netherlands. In '908, when European men got the right to vote for the city councils, Charlotte Jacobs, the sister of the leading Dutch feminist AlettaJacobs founded an Indies branch of the Dutch Association for

Women's Suffrage *{Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht}.* In the 1910S the association consisted of several hundred members, organised in eight sections, mainly located in the cities of java." It was a conservative feminist organisation, which for instance abhorred the strategies of British suffragettes and considered that the women's place should be in the home. Yet, despite its moderate character, its board members had great difficulty to arouse female interest in politics. Most of its work depended on just a few women.

The Indies branch was a Eurocentric organisation, primarily striving to unite European women and to prepare them for a more important role in public society." It was only in 1915 - in a period of public debates regarding the extension of city and local councils and the impending institution of the People's Council- that the board resolved to take public action and started to request female membership for all these institutions. It focused on suffrage for European women first and foremost. Although it claimed the equality of European and Indonesian women, Indonesian female membership was not reported on in those early years. Even the internationally famous feminists Carry Chapman Catt and Alerta Jacobs could not escape from their colonial position during their three month tour through the Indies in 1912. Aletta [acobs, for instance, was pleasantly surprised to see some Indonesian women in her audiences; she had expected to discuss this Dutch issue exclusively with European people.u The association's attitude towards Indonesian women's organisations was just as 'maternalistic', as its positive reactions at the founding of Indonesian women's organisations illustrated.v

There were some specific reasons for this focus on the Netherlands. Progressive Dutch women experienced their distance from the exciting suffrage struggle in Europe as a keen problem. The association's meetings were 'a way to keep in contact with European trends despite the tropical isolation'.[15] Moreover, according to the principle of legislative concordance, the association expected to have the women's right to vote extended to the Indies, once it was won in the Netherlands. The association thus looked to the 'motherland' as a guiding light in the struggle.

Its members, therefore, were highly disappointed when in 1916 the proposal of the People's Council was discussed in the Dutch Parliament. According to the ministerial proposal, this council would consist of representatives from the three population groups. The liberal Minister of the Colonies, Th. Pleyte, had deleted the adjective 'male' from his draft and proposed membership of both men and women of all races 'because to the undersigned no reasons are known that make the woman less capable of taking part in their nation's government than the man'.[16] Women in the Indies would thus have won the passive vote

(and possibly seats for themselves on the People's Council) as early as 1916, had it not been for strong opposition in the Dutch Parliament.

Two religious parties (the Protestant *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij* and the Catholic *Rooms Katholieke Staatspartij)* voiced vociferous protests. Their representatives did not raise objections on biological principles; the times of aggressive ruminations about female heads and brains being incapable of political activity had long passed. But both political parties considered the proposal badly timed, because the Parliament had not yet accepted women's suffrage in the Netherlands itself They also looked elsewhere for concrete examples and were happy to find that Britain's Indian Council Act of 1909 had also excluded women. Moreover, no active struggle for the right to vote in the Indies had even **been mounted; indigenous women were not yet ready for it; the vote would run** counter to tradition or *adat.* The name of Kartini (1879-1904), known by the publication of her Dutch-written letters of 19II, was on the lips of many members of Parliament during the debates about the People's Council. Not because she herself had advocated the right to vote, but because she served as a convincing example to both sides. For champions of 'the cause' she was a brilliant emblem of what educated Indonesian women were capable of in a democratic institution like the People's Council. For opponents she had proven – through her polygamous marriage – how Javanese women ultimately preferred tradition *(adat).'7* In fact, during the parliamentary debates Indonesian women figured more prominently than European women. About the latter it was said that women's suffrage would endanger family life in the Indies and put women 'on the road to degeneration'!'Although Pleyte received socialist and liberal support, the strong opposition of the religious parties made him back off from his original proposal. In his opinion, 'a detail' like voting rights for women should not endanger the bill itself.

That women should fight for women's suffrage themselves and not receive it as a gift has characterised the suffrage struggle generally, as recent research **has brought** forward.'? **However, at that moment, the strongest feminist organisation, the Dutch Association for Women's Suffrage, was too busy strug**gling for the right to vote in the Netherlands to pay much attention to the **colonies. Aletta Jacobs wrote an ineffective protest against the amendments to** Pleyte's proposal in its journal.[20] In spite of her personal and professional connections to the Indies, the Association fought a parochial Dutch batrle. Dutch **feminists in general did not concern themselves with women in the non-**Western world. They looked to the inspiring examples of gratifying victories in **other Western nations but rarely were interested in what was happening 'below' in less advanced** countries."

In the Indies itself, Indonesian feminists had yet to take up this issue. Indonesian women had become visible in the *Putri Mardika* (the Independent Woman) organisation, founded in 1912 in close relationship to the first nationalist party, *Budi Utomo*. However - as mentioned before - this and the many other Indonesian women's organisations to emerge during the 1910S, were generally apolitical and expressed more interest in social questions such as education, polygamy, and welfare than in political debates or the right to vote.[22] The nine Javanese educated ladies from the upper classes who contributed their feminist wishes to an official report on the position of women in Java and Madura of 1914, did not spend one word on the suffrage issue. Their writings illustrated the Dutch or Western orientation of the first wave of national awakening, when the Indonesian elite still identified modernity with Dutch culture. Belonging to the colonial state for these women implied the privilege (they did not even claim the right) of a European education (for some even preferably with Dutch teachers), improvement of married life, and attention to the problems of peasant women."

The Indies branch of the Association for Women's Suffrage had not been very effective either. The association did not win the support of any of the newly founded political parties in the Indies, not even of the Indies liberals.[24] It was still silent about the Indonesian women's suffrage. It based its claims of voting rights and a colonial citizenship on the important role of (European) women in the social and moral development of the colony. When its members mentioned Kartini, it was as an example of what education could do and as an illustration of the civilising influence of European women, who had been her friends through letter writing." To cite the chairperson, M. Nittel-de Wolff van Westerode in 1917:

> *Since she [the European woman,* ELS] *has been present, a spirit of refinement and civilisation has come to the deepest recesses of the interior regions [of the archipelago], a revolution in social and moral thoughts of the European population, which later expanded to include native society."*

Mrs Nittel mentioned racial hierarchy and the maintenance of white prestige itself as an additional reason for the necessity of a more public role for European women. If the 'uneducated native' were to earn political rights, how much more the educated European woman? According to Mrs Nittel - who voiced her opinions in terms painfully revealing for colonial discourse and attitudes of the time - 'the Native' would like to see a European female guardian besides the European male. For 'certainly in his heart the Native (...) also has

respect for the European woman, whom he perceives as a personality, standing above him in culture, development and morality'."? The prestige of 'the white woman' demanded political rights for her immediately.

This early form of Dutch feminism in the Indies could thus be characterised as highly Euro- or ethnocentric, racist and elitist. It portrayed the European woman as the saviour of (European) civilisation, who was therefore entitled to a public role in the Indies political life. It was a colonial feminism, limited by the restrictions of the colonial mentality itself Except for its support of women's rights, its discourse fit seamlessly into the general male language of racial and educational superiority. European women, progressive in their moderately emancipated behaviour, had adapted fully to the colonial context. Although, explicitly, they did not limit the right to vote only to themselves, their lines of argumentation left little room for the rights of Indonesian women, even of the elite.

When, in 1925, the word 'male' was deleted from the amended Dutch Administration Law, it was not the feminist movement - in the Netherlands or the Indies – which was directly responsible for this important change. This amendment had been advocated by a male Indies suffrage commission and was warmly applauded by the newly installed female members in the Dutch Parliament. As these female members stated, it was unfair to deny Dutch women in the Indies a citizen's right that they had possessed in Holland; just as it was unfair to make a distinction between women of the various population groups." After all, no such distinction was made between men of the different population groups. After 1925, Dutch laws no longer prevented the political participation of women. Voting principles, implying racial and gender equality had been imported from the Netherlands. Now it was up to the Indies government to put them into practice.

THE SECOND PHASE: IN THE IN DIES, 1925-1937

The Indies government took up the issue of implementation as soon as possible. In 1925, the voting regulations for city councils in the Indies were revised. Although the administration of Governor-General D. Fock (1921-1925) has been stamped in historiography as conservative, this revision certainly was not. It proposed lowering the voting age to 21 years; lowering the census requirement and making it equal for all population groups; to replace the requirement of proficiency in Dutch with the requirement of literacy in Dutch, Malay or a local language and to include women's voting rights, active and passive.'? But the People's Council, which had already advocated the franchise for women in

1919,30 had meanwhile changed political composition. The conservative council excluded women, with a majority of twenty three to seventeen. Indonesian members were divided evenly (nine to eight) between the opponents and the supporters of the government.[31]

The government had been brought to its proposal because women in the Netherlands already possessed the right to vote and because in Java, some categories of village women were already allowed to take part in regency council elections. In some parts of Java *adat* allowed female household heads and female landowners who shared certain village duties, to participate in *desa* (village) elections. Regency councils were chosen according to the same rules. Some Javanese women were thus already involved in political decision making on lower administrative levels. If rural Indonesian women possessed this right, then it should also be extended to Indonesian women in the cities as well as to non-indigenous women.>

The debate in the People's Council was reminiscent of the earlier debates on this issue in Holland. The People's Council restricted itself to two arguments: *adat* and the lack of a direct demand or struggle for the vote in the Indies, which made the measure 'untimely'.» Opponents drew different conclusions from the same *adat* argument: female land-owners could choose electors indeed but could not be chosen themselves as electors nor as members of the *desa* or regency councils; so there was no reason to grant women the right to vote. Only if 'a general, in any case very empathic urge' for women's suffrage would manifest itself among women, should the government allow them this right, some members stated.>

The *adat* argument would run like a proverbial thread throughout the ongoing debate about women's voting rights. Explained in Java-centric terms, it was in fact a hollow one. *Adat* provided women in the various regions of the archipelago with sometimes completely opposing positions. Minahasan women from North Celebes (now Sulawesi) enjoyed a high level of general education and great parity with men in public life and were not to be excluded from administrative rights and duties; the Minangkabau had a tradition which left women with less political room, despite being based on a matrilineal system. Ambonese and Javanese *adat* did not seem to oppose voting rights for women. Yet, despite this *adat,* no such direct demand had been found among twenty four West-javanese villages, consulted on this matter around 1920. Inhabitants of twelve villages had expressed their approval of the active vote by women. Twelve had been highly negative; the question was met with 'laughter'; no cooperation was expected from either men or women; women present at the research conference stated 'unanimously that they would not accept the

granting of voting rights',35 The passive vote could reckon on even less approval. Only three villages agreed to female membership on representative councils, while nineteen were (highly) negative on the issue. Contrary to Western voting rights policies, Javanese tradition thus seemed more open to active than to passive voting rights: women could elect but not be elected. As the debates would illustrate, indigenous traditions or *adat* would remain a too highly contested issue to allow for the framing of emancipatory voting policies.

Women's suffrage would have to wait for persons and organisations, more attuned to modernity and change. Women's organisations, however, were not raising their voices on this issue at that moment. In 1925, the Indonesian women's organisations were still focused on education and marriage questions. Support of the voting issue among European women was also lacking. The Association for Women's Suffrage in the Indies had fallen silent. It had suspended the publication of its journal in 1923 and would not resurface until October 1926 (see below).

Women of all the population groups remained excluded across the board; no racial distinctions were made. Women in general did not count in the Indies political and public life. This was again proven in '930 and '93', when - at the request of the Dutch Parliament - the Minister of the Colonies put pressure upon the Indies government to nominate female members to the People's Council. This initiatives did not bear any fruit; they were countered by the same old arguments, now expressed by both the Governor General and the People's Council Chairman. Governor-General A.C.D. de Graeff ('926-'93')' generally labelled a progressive, repeated the statement that the women's movement in the Indies was so unimportant that it would not even be worthwhile to nominate a woman. The People's Council itself, he added, was not interested in female participation. Moreover, if a European woman was nominated, an Indonesian woman could not be passed over; yet nominating an Indonesian woman would earn disapproval rather than approbation among the majority of the indigenous population and lower the status of the People's Council itself. Only when the social position of indigenous women was developed in a Western way (i.e., would have reached a Western level), could the question be raised again. In '93', De Graeffs successor, RC. de Jonge offered the same response when his Minister tried to pressure him into a more lenient attitude towards women.[36]

Both De Graeffs and De Jonge raised the same issues: *adat,* (interpreted in a conservative way), the unimportance of the women's movement and the demand for equal treatment of the population groups. But now the government argued from the vantage point of the European population group; if a

European woman should be nominated, so also should an Indonesian. The Association for Women's Suffrage in the Indies, revived in 1926, had also tried to bring the government to consider other thoughrs.v In vain.

INDONESIAN AND COLONIAL FEMINISM

To the more nationalist groups of the Indonesian women's movement of the time a female representative on the People's Council or the right to vote for colonial councils could hardly be considered attractive. In the 1920, the Indonesian nationalist movement had adopted the strategy of noncooperation. The main organisations had withdrawn their members from colonial councils.

During this decade many nationalist political parties and religious organisations had established women's branches. Besides organisations such as the Islamic reformist *Aisyiyah,* the sister organisation of *Muhammadiyah,* there were, for instance, the wives of board members of *Budi Utomo* who had founded *Wanita Utomo.* In connection to *Pemuda Indonesia* (Young Indonesia), *Putri Indonesia* (Indonesian Girls) came into being. The Young Islamic Alliance *Uong Is/amieten Bond,* JIB) recognised the Young Islamic Alliance Ladies Branch *Uong Is/amieten Bond Dames Afdeling,* JIBDA) as (semi)-autonomous organisation. *Pasundan Istri* (PASI) was founded in 1930 as the social women's branch of the West-Javanese nationalist party *Pasundan,* with an independent position under its own board.[38]

Like nationalism itself, the Indonesian women's movement had become organised along various ideological lines, roughly divided by women themselves in a reformist-Islamic and a secular-nationalist section. While a few of the Islamic organisations counted its members by thousands from different classes, the numerous secular groups did so by hundreds or even tens, mostly women from the elite.[39] Both groups were still united, however, in their focus on female education and the debate about (reformed) polygamy.[40] The nationalist movement of the 1920S and 1930S did little to change the minds of its secular feminist counterpart and to win them for politics. It only wanted them to side in the nationalist struggle for national independence. True emancipation would only be possible within that framework. Women could and should serve as 'helpmates' in the struggle for the national causc.v'

Politics was a possible area of contention between secular feminist and Islamic women's organisations. In order to maintain its unity, the first national Women's Congress of thirty organisations of December 1928, had therefore decided to exclude any debate on political matters and to focus on social issues only. The Association of Indonesian Women, founded at that congress, the

Perikatan Perempuan Indonesia (PPI), proclaimed political and religious neutrality. It also underlined the particular identity and duties of men and women, which implied equivalence, not equality. After the congress, a Dutch civil servant reported with satisfaction about 'the modest and well-considered conservatism of the Native woman, that is not easily pushed aside by the suggestive influences of revolutionary nationalists'rf At its 1930 congress, however, the renamed PPI, now PPII *(Perikatan Perhimpunan Isteri Indonesia,* Federation of Indonesian Wives Organisations) mentioned women's suffrage for the first time, albeit only as a subject to be researched. It proclaimed itself part of the national movement in which women would act conform their 'female character'. Moreover, the PPII broadened its concerns to matters of hygiene, female labourers and the trafficking in women and children. In 1932, it even more explicitly, recognised nationalism as one of its basic principles besides social concerns, religious neutrality and 'womanness'.

This move towards a more explicitly political position was influenced by a newcomer to the world of women's organisations, *Isteri Sedar* (the Conscious Woman), founded in 1930. Chaired by Soewarni Pringgodigdo, it immediately struck a more politically active tone. Its explicit goal of the equality between men and women revealed its feminist-democratic character. **It** did not register

Indonesian Women's Congress of I930 December I930, where the PPI changed its name in PPII, *Perikatan Perbimpunan Isteri Indonesia* or Federation of Indoncsian Wives Organisations (KITLY, Leiden).

with the PPII, because it refused to put the familial role of women as the first point on its agenda and because it differed with Islamic women's organisations on the issue of polygamy.[43] In 1932, another more moderate, secular women's organisation *Isteri Indonesia* (Indonesian Women) was founded, which would earn some fame through her chairwoman, Maria Ullfah Santoso. She had received her law degree from Leiden University in 1933 and - after her return to the Indies - worked as a high school teacher in a Muhammadyah school in Batavia.t- Even Isteri Sedar and Isteri Indonesia did not yet mention voting rights for women in their early programs. In the decades of noncooperative nationalism, Isteri Sedar's interest in political participation in colonial institutions may have been minimal. However, the interest for female representation in political bodies was increasing among Indonesian *priyayi* women, who had come into contact with public life. In 1934 the board of the PPBB, the Association of Indigenous Civil Servants, suggested a woman as its reserve candidate for the People's Council, R.A. Wiranata Koesoema the wife of the chair person R.A.A. Wiranata Koesoema, at the time a member of the People's Council himself (1922-1935). The PPBB, however, did not elect her."

The Indonesian women's movement remained distant from European feminism, as represented by the Association for Women's Suffrage in the Indies. What would it have stood to gain from this small and conservative institution? When the association was revived in 1926, it remained the structurally weak organisation it had been before. In the 1930S it had to compete for membership with other European women's organisations, that had come into existence, such as the Association for Housewives in the Indies and the Indo-European Alliance Women's Organisation *(Indo-Europeesch Verbond Vrouwen-Organisatie*, 1EV-VO), both founded in 1931. Instead of the 10.000 members of the Association for Housewives, the association could only count on a few hundred members, organised in sections in the big cities of Java.[46] This small number was partly due to regular system of job rotation of men, the daily problems of the economic crisis, and fear of politics. The association's journal abounds with complaints about the apathetic and complacent nature of European women. One regularly heard statements like We *have* to conquer that; we *have* to raise her interest in political matters'r'? Politics were identified with party interests and low ambitions and thus proved a difficult theme and a dangerous subject for European women. In 1931, the board even changed the name of the association to the more neutral Association for Women's Rights in the Netherlands Indies *(Vereeniging voor Vrouwenrechten in Neder/andsch-Indie)*, in order to attract more European women.s" A few years later, it even denied that the association was a political organisation at all.[49]

The association indeed served a broad spectrum of women's interests. It worked for female participation in local and national councils, for uniformity between Indies and Dutch laws regarding fatherhood and the legal admission of women as witnesses in a court of law. The association also protested against laws, that forbade married women to work, and was active in the world peace movement. Like other European women's organisations, it expressed ideals of motherhood as the ultimate goal in life for a woman, while it also focused on issues of health, and child care for future mothers, thus illustrating how important health and hygiene issues were among European women in the colony.[5°]

The association remained an (almost) totally European organisation, although it did invite Indonesian women to become members. Only a few Indonesian women from the educated *priyayi* elite actually joined." Kartini's sister, R. A. Santosa, who lived in Kudus, was the only Indonesian woman to serve as a central board member for a while (1927-1931). When in 1932 Indonesian membership had declined to under ten, the association's board suggested separate sections for Indonesian women to attract Indonesian members, and that these be represented on the general board. But because of a (temporary) slight increase in Indonesian membership this proposal was withdrawn, to the satisfaction of Mrs Rangkajo Chailan Sjamsoe Datoe ToemenggoengY The latter had joined the association because the Indonesian women's movement did not have women's suffrage on its agenda. As the wife of an Indonesian civil servant, who would also become a member of the People's Council ('935-'939), she was deeply involved with women's issues and public representation. In '93' she became a board member of the Batavia section. She left the board after one year, formally because of her heavy workload due to the economic world crisis; but her withdrawal form the board may well have been caused by differences of opinion between her and the board about the Indonesian women's position in the association.v

There was indeed little for Indonesian women to gain from their membership. The board repeatedly (in 1926, '927, '930, and 1934) suggested names of female candidates to the People's Council, that could be nominated by the government, but they were all Dutch women.[54] When in '934 Mrs Datoe Toemenggoeng forwarded complaints about this one-sidedness, the board expressed the hopes that the Indonesian women's movement itself would suggest some names of Indonesian women.x Mrs Datoe Toemenggoeng is not reported to have raised her voice again.

Relations between the association and the Indonesian women's movement were and remained strained. Little information about the Indonesian women's movement reached the members.[56] The association nominally supported the

Indonesian women's movement, 'although her struggle is different from ours', as it stated in 1928 - without explaining this difference.[57] The Indonesian women's organisations would not yet 'long for this right (women's suffrage)' and would not 'work for *it'.*[58] The association thus remained the highly colonial or 'maternalistic' institution it had always been. The association thus adhered to and enlarged the existing social and political separation between the population groups, which was broadened in the repressive and crisis-stricken 1930s when Dutch political organisations moved to the right under the influence of the Patriotic Club *(Vaderlandsche Club).*

In 1928, the association's board invited itself to the first general Indonesian Women's Congress. When this was politely rejected because of the Indonesian character of the congress, the chairwoman, Sophie van Overveldt-Biekart, expressed feelings of regret and reproof. In her opinion, the Indonesian women's movement could learn from its European sister organisation. She regretted the Indonesian lack of interest in co-operation and she further doubted whether it would be in the interest of the Indonesian women's movement

> *to exclude us* [. .] *where we European women, better equipped for the struggle, could serve her in many aspects of inftrmation and support. We have considered ourselves as the stronger sister and have counted it our duty to reach out to the weaker.*[59]

The ambivalence of this colonising position emerged specifically in 1935, after the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship had published a resolution on the necessary 'co-operation of women of East and West'. For societies in countries with colonial possessions this implied that women should take responsibility for the conditions of colonised women, as much as for women in their own countries. One of the association's board members stated naively that the Indies association had always perceived its task 'as broadly as possible' and had as a matter of course also included 'the Native woman in her sphere of interest'.60 The journal bears no testimony to these words.

Colonial feminism stood on the other side of the colonial divide. In spite of the progressiveness of feminism in general, its European variety in this colony was part of the right wing of colonial politics. Its leaders were politically affiliated with the largest and most active European political parties: the conservative Patriotic Club *(Vaderlandsche Club,* vc), founded in 1929 as a response to the liberal tendencies of Governor-General De Graeff, and the Indo-European Alliance (IEv). Association's spokeswoman in those years was Sophie van

Overveldt-Biekart, who was also an active vc member. She had participated in the struggle for women's suffrage in the Netherlands between 1904 and 1919 in The Hague and after her marriage with an administrator of a sugar factory in Kendal she had been active in organisations in the Indies since the early 1920S.6' She served the association by presiding it from 1928-1935 and by editing its journal, whose pages she managed to fill almost single-handedly. In these functions she did not hesitate to offer her vc views on colonial politics. Se thought, for instance, that Dutch guidance was required 'for an interminable future'. Earlier withdrawal would be 'a misjudgement of a high vocation'i'f

Perceptions of Indonesian women seldom appeared in the journal, but when they did, they were usually of a generalising and 'orientalising' tone and did not take class differences into account. The need for an Indonesian section of the association, as mentioned above, was legitimised by the argument that Western women were not able to fully understand the Eastern woman, 'because she has a completely different mentality and because her life is fully dominated by the religion and adat'[63] Or, as the former chairwoman and honoraty member Mrs M. Stibbe-Knoch wrote in 1934, when she argued for a female People's Council candidate from the European population group in the first place: 'to the Native woman, uneducated as she is, the task of being a lonely member of the People's Council would be far too difficult'64 Racial difference was 'explained' - not in biological, but in educational and cultural-religious terms. The association thus refused to honour its educated Indonesian members, and put them on a par with the non-educated masses. Indonesian women remained culturally different and 'other'. Moreover, the association's members overlooked the qualified leaders of the Indonesian women's organisations, who were educated as teachers or lawyers just like some of the colonial feminists themselves[65]

Aligned to conservative European political parties, Dutch colonial feminism presented itself as fully involved in the colonial project. Its criticism only addressed European women's exclusion from participatory colonial citizenship. The revived association claimed this female citizenship on the basis of their rights in the Netherlands, on the conservative maxim of maintaining of 'law and order' and the notion of a social or 'spiritual motherhood', Women would appease political turmoil and keep Indonesian men from rebellion. As Sophie van Overveldt wrote in 1931:

> *Especially in a country like the Indies where in some layers of the population feeling may run high, the gift of political participation to women will be of great preventive significance.*[66]

Moreover, women would extend their maternal qualities to the society at large. The right to vote would not politicise them, but would instead enable them 'to spread their wings over society' and in that way change the world for the better.[67] Women's role in the family and in the nation-state were considered identical. This 'familial feminism' or 'social motherhood' served as the dominant ideology of European women in the Indies. Demands were not based on 'equality' but on 'equivalence', not on the notion that all individuals were born equal and therefore deserved the same rights but on the notion of gender differences. Filling in these differences with the traditional notion of motherhood, the association extended its meaning for strategic purposes, idealising it and underlining its harmonising effects on the world at large. As in other examples of a familial discourse, this rhetoric masked racial and class exclusion: not all mothers would get this task.[68]

In view of the conservative political position of the association, the noncooperation between this organisation and the Indonesian women's movement is not suprising. Working together with such an organisation could hardly be attractive to Indonesian women's organisations related to the nationalist movement. There was thus no reason at all for female solidarity in general, or for a communal action for women's suffrage in particular.

THE FIRST FEMALE MEMBER OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

The principle of the non-distinction of racial difference in the suffrage issue, maintained by the government since 1916, was officially abandoned in 1935. The conservative Governor-General De Jonge at the point nominated C.H. (Cor) Razoux Schultz-Merzer as the first female member of the People's Council.[69] De Jonge had not suddenly turned progressive; he must carefully have calculated this step. He wanted to nominate 'a woman, who is at the centre of the social movement C..) not a champion of women's rights as such'Z? Mrs Razoux Schultz, who De Jonge knew personally, was just that. Although a board member of the Association for Women's Rights since May 1934 (one of her many board memberships), she was first and foremost socially active. Trained in the Netherlands as a primary school teacher and as a *totok* married to an Indo-European, she had founded and was still the chairwoman of the Women's Organisation of the Indo-European Alliance (the *Indo-Europeesch Verbond-Vrouwen Organisatie* or IEV-VO). This women's organisation concerned itself with social welfare and had no political ambitions.?'

Her nomination, however, was a disappointment to the Association for Women's Rights: not only had its candidates been passed over, but Mrs Razoux

Cor Razoux Schultz-Metzer, the first woman nominated to the People's Council, 1935-1940 (Coll. A.F. Razoux Schultz).

Schultz's inaugural speech had been so subdued." By accepting this nomination Razoux Schultz had put herself in a difficult position indeed. As a central board member of the association, she herself had supported the nomination of Sophie van Overve1dt-Biekart and Mrs H.].V.O. Kluit-Ke1der. In the small world of Batavian women this must have raised an uproar.Z'

Indonesian reactions to her nomination were more varied. The Indonesian press complained about the increased conservatism of the new People's Council, reinforced also by the appointment of Razoux Schultz. Some journalists expressed their hopes for the nomination of an Indonesian women soon}4 According to others, RazolIX Schultz's maiden speech showed how little she knew about the world ofIndonesian women. For she had stated that she personally favoured an Indonesian female colleague, but only if Indonesian women would have attained greater equality with men." Like her colleagues from the Association for Women's Rights she completely overlooked class dif-

ferences within Indonesian society. She did not seem to realise that a growing number of Indonesian women's leaders held equal or higher degrees (Maria Ullfah Santoso) than she herself.

Cor Razoux Schultz did not disappoint De Jonge. She proved to be a most loyal follower to the government. During her council years she would frequently claim that her position was apolitical, which often resulted in paradoxical situations as it was basically impossible to restrict herself to social questions only in this political body. In 1936, for instance, contrary to the Indo-European Association, she rejected the important Petition Sutardjo, wherein the People's Council requested a Round Table Conference on the future of the Indies from the Dutch government,?6 On the other hand, she opposed the government and the Indo-European Alliance (IEv) on the issue of women' suffrage.

The Third Phase: 1937-1941

The last phase can be characterised as a period of intensified debate concerning notions of equality in gender and race - the inclusion of women in public life as colonial citizens and whether such rights should be extended to European women only or to women from all races or population groups. In 1937 a new advisory suffrage commission, consisting of male civil servants and members of the People's Council, delivered its report to the Indies government. It echoed the official position of the '930S, by advocating that Dutch women be given the right to vote, and it was divided about this right for women of the other population groups. However, the report argued that women of all groups should be eligible for membership in political bodies.r?

The government did not heed this moderate advice. A regulation for the election of the city councils, which was discussed in the People's Council in September 1937 only insured that women would be included as eligible council members sometime in the near future. The Indies government also admitted that it no longer had any objections to giving the right to vote to European women. However, it foresaw practical problems, since registration procedures would be complicated and expensive: women were not personally included in the tax system. In view of the very limited interest regarding this matter among European women, more research was required. As for the suffrage by Indonesian, Chinese, and Arab women, however, the Indies government remained explicitly negative, 'because generally they occupy such a position in their surroundings that an independent exercise of the vote is not compatible with it')8 Again, the low level of development and a conservative interpretation of *adat* served to justify racial discrimination of women.

The People's Council was divided in its reactions, the split running through the three population groups,?9 Now the debate focused on the family first, and (again) on *adat.* In diametrically opposed analyses, advocates and opponents of women's suffrage turned to the same issues. Again, the traditional rights of female landowners to elect village chiefs and regency councils was debated. **The religious argument was extensively countered by some Indonesian members:** Islam did not have any objections on principle against women's suffrage, as evidenced by women who voted in Turkey since '924. The family was the main bone of contention. Opponents, such as the Islamic Sumatran member of the National Section *(Nationale Fractie),* Abdoel Firman Gelar Maharadja Soangkoepon, and D. de Hoog of the Indo-European Alliance (IEv), for instance, stated that women should take care of their families first and foremost; that was already a full-time job which left no time for social and political concerns; the vote would disrupt marriages because of possible differences of opinion; women would neglect their children; and they ought not be involved in the outside world.

Mrs Razoux Schultz, one of the main speakers, reacted by also stressing the importance of the family and the particular nature of women. According to her, the struggle for voting rights was not based on the assumption of equality between men and women, but on the assumption of difference. She further **stated, that women should devote themselves more to their families; this was** and had always been their wish. Razoux Schultz did not see a conflict between **caring for one's family and caring for society in general. Moreover, the vote would have an educational function for women as well, since it would open** their eyes to the larger world and channel their activities in more useful directions. Another member claimed that women had a right to influence the development of a world in which they had to educate their children. Women would be better prepared than men to speak out about the social issues relevant to women and children. Here, as with the Association for Women's Rights, a **'social motherhood' or 'familial feminism' was at stake.**

During the debates some of the differences among the various population groups were partially healed. Razoux Schultz introduced a motion asking the Indies government to speed up the introduction of women's suffrage for all **population groups, because, as she stated: 'we as Europeans - at least I as a European woman - do not want to have the right to vote granted only to ourselves and not to other women as well'.80 The motion passed.**

In September '937 the People's Council had thus left its '925 position; it had accepted the principle of women's suffrage and had restored the idea of the racial equality of women. The council now moved along with the material

The People's Council in 1939(Coil. A.F. Razoux Schultz).

changes of modernity in colonial society: educated women of all population groups had become more visible in their associations, welfare work and professional labour. The movement for women's suffrage was now more broadly based. Strong pressure from those female vc members, who were involved in the Association for Women's Rights, had begun to bear fruit: in 1936 the Patriotic Club (vc) had included the issue in its agenda.[51]

No longer could anybody argue that the women's movement was silent on the issue. In honour of the reopened debate the European Association for Women's Rights (renamed after its sister organisation in the Netherlands as Indies Association for Women's Interests and Equal Citizenship, *Nederlandscb-Indische Vereeniging voor Vrouwenbelangen en Gelijk Staatsburgerschap),* had sent requests demanding the right to vote to the Indies government and the People's Council. It based this demand firstly on its legally acknowledged voting rights in the Netherlands; secondly on the 'important contribution' of women in the construction of colonial society and their 'indispensable cooperation and influence' in its further developrnent.[P] Thus, it still primarily claimed a colonial citizenship for European women. Only the last paragraph mentioned the inclusion of indigenous women, because their exclusion would not be in line with the increased activity of the Indonesian women's movement.

But the tequest carefully added that in some tegions separate regulations might be necessary in view of *adat* or religious practices.v Some months later, it even made the presumption that 'the Native woman' (whoever that might be) would fully agree with the recognition of European women's voting rights, because she would see it as a step forward in her own battles for suffrage" The Women's Organisation of the Indo-European Alliance (IEV-vo), followed suit. Within her 'own' organisation, Razoux Schultz argued for women's voting rights without ever mentioning women of other population groups. 85

The government did not honour the People's Council's wishes, however; it only stuck to its principle of the eligibility of all women for the city councils. By the time of the 1938 elections, these councils had been opened up to women. Their 'social motherhood'legitimised this decision. The Council's debate on the issue was an echo of the earlier ones. Arguments about the centrality of the family, the educational value of the measure, and regret about the absence of the active vote figured prominently in the debates. The government also repeated its former promises about further research on active voting rights and Native and Chinese customs in this respecr.f" In the city council elections of 1938 women did indeed appear on the lists of many parties: six European and three Indonesian women won seats in one of the city councils. 87

The issue now figured prominently on the agenda of the Indonesian women's movement. The new cooperative mood of the late 1930S, reinforced the popularity of the councils in general. In the first half of '938, the active women's section of the nationalist party of West-Java Pasundan, *Pasundan Isteri* and the women's section of the Association of Indigenous Civil Servants (PPBB), *Persatuan Isteri Pegawai Bumiputra* (P1PB), in which Mrs Datoe Toemenggoeng was playing a leading role at that moment, had requested that all councils be opened up to women. In June 1938, the Indonesian women's organisation *Isteri Indonesia* decided to work for a female council member in every city, where it had sections. The *Kongres Perempuan Indonesia* (Indonesian Women's Congress), the successor of the PPII, discussed women's suffrage during the third Women's Congress of July 1938. For the first time the Indonesian press showed an active interest in the participation of women in city government. It discussed candidates as well as the useful role of women in councils in general."

However, this increased interest fell on deaf ears with the government. Requests by the Indonesian women's movement to nominate Indonesian women, Maria Ullfah Santoso or Mrs Datoe Toemenggoeng, to the People's Council were not honoured. In '939, at the inauguration of the new People's Council, only Mrs Razoux Schultz's nomination was renewed, a painful disap-

Central board of Pasundan Isreri, chairwoman Emma Poeradiredja seated second from left *(De Indoneslscbe Vrouw I898-I948,* Batavia 1948).

pointment for the Indonesian nationalist movement in general and Indonesian women's organisations specifically. Certainly women like Emma Poeradiredja, chair of *Pasundan Isteri,* board member of Pasundan and member of the city council of Bandung, and Maria Ullfah Santoso, at that moment active in the *Kongres Perempuan Indonesia,* were highly qualified for such a position.t? Women's organisations held various protest meetings, in which motions asking the government for a redress of this unfortunate step as soon as possible, were accepted. A committee of different women's organisations even organised a protest march in Batavia for August 6, 1939 - still quite an uncommon way of demonstrating at that time. However, the march never happened because the colonial authorities forbade it - a deception to those Indonesian press commentators who had actually expected a more tolerant decision because the march was organised by women.??

European women's organisations at this time remained completely silent on the issue. Nor did the government show in any way that it had taken heed of the requests. In May 1940, Mrs Razoux Schulrz's seat became vacant because the war in Europe prevented her return from furlough in the Netherlands. The Governor General replaced her in November 1940 with the politically unaffiliated j.Ch. Neuyen-Hakker, a medical doctor who had become known as board

member of different social organisation. One month later, the Patriotic Club (vc) filled another vacant seat with a second woman, S.A.Th. Goudszwaard-Knipscheer; **a pharmacist from** Bandung.v' **That a woman from the most right** wing Dutch party won a seat in this body stood in painful contrast to the fact that Indonesian women at the other end of the political spectrum continued to **remain excluded.**

WINNING THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The colonial government did not rush to fullfil its plight regarding voting rights. Only in September 1941, four years after its first promises and two months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, did the issue finally return to the People's Council. Although both the Council of the Indies, an advisory body of experienced administrators, and the ministry of the Colonies in The **Hague had advised to include Indonesian women, the Indies government** stuck **to its earlier** position.?" **It announced the introduction of voting rights for** European women only, claiming that practical and theoretical impediments prevented extension of voting rights to women of all groups. The same old Orientalist arguments of adatlreligion and lack of education justified this deci**sion. The government considered it 'incorrect to enforce a process [of emanci**pation] on the basis of Western ideologies of political equality of men and women'css Political rights had to be rooted in the consciousness of the population, which was not yet mature enough. Islamic orthodoxy in the Indies did not **allow women to vote. Registration on the basis of taxes would be too difficult.**

The bill caused an uproar among representatives of all population groups. In view of the 1937position of the People's Council, and its stance one month **earlier, this was not too surprising. In August 1941, the council had almost** unanimously accepted a motion from the Indonesian nationalist Mohamad Yamin in favour of making women eligible in all regional councils.v" The active lobbying by the *Kongres Perempuan Indonesia,* representing 30 associations and thousands of members, had also had a positive effect. At its fourth congress in July 1941, it had again accepted a motion in favour of the right to vote for women.i"

Indonesian nationalists joined their ranks. The outbreak of the Second World War in Europe in 1939 had made democracy and representative institutions more popular. The People's Council also profited from this revival in par**liamentary enthusiasm, while the broadening of democratic** institutions **to a** larger public became a hot issue. In that same year, the *Gabungan Politik Indonesia* (Gapi, Indonesian Political Federation) was founded, which - unit-

ing the Islamic and secular nationalist parties - was to formulate a parliamentary reform programme emphasising representative government. It had included women's suffrage in its platform. As part of this organisation, even important Islamic parties such as the *Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia* and the *Partai Islam Indonesia,* now supported women's voting rights.

Moreover, preparation for war further reinforced a unity among the Indies public. The Government Committee, installed in '940 to report on demands for structural political changes, the Commission Visman, found strong requests to put an end to all racial discrimination.v" In Batavia educated women from all population groups met one another in welfare work and at other social occasions. This cooperation in the name of the civil defence had even brought the Indies Association of Women's Interests and Equal Citizenship to a less Eurocentric position. In '939 it had started to take part in the informal meals with Chinese and Indonesian women of the so-called *'Hutspot-club'* (Hedge-Podge Club), founded by the Chinese medical doctor Thung Sin Nio. In '94', the new board in Bandung also tried to unify all women's organisations in one general Women's Council. 97 The 'for-whites/Europeans only' draft thus ran against the grain of public sentiments.[98]

The Peoples Council protested vociferously. The debates started under the vigilant eyes of many Indonesian and Chinese women at the public gallery, later also joined by Dutch women, who thus manifested their avid interest in the matter. The women's right to vote united parties at the extremes of the political and racial spectrum. The conservative Patriotic Club (vc), the Indies Roman Catholic Party *(Indische Katholieke Party),* the Indo-European Alliance (IEv), and the Indonesian Nationalist Section *(Fraksi Nasional Indonesia),* a combination of nationalist parties, were unanimous on the subject. Mrs Neuyen-Hakker acted as the first spokesperson, setting the tone in a debate that was joined by speakers of all racial groups. Mrs Neuyen-Hakker had not proved to be a critic of colonialism before. She had been opposed to constitutional reforms after '940, as demanded by the nationalist movement, and had been sceptical about close relations between different population groups, 'because their nature and character are so strongly different'v? However, she was adamant on the right to vote. Although grateful that European women were now equal to men in this regard, she preferred the 'unity and equality of the rights of all the population groups - as much as possible'.'?" Even if the bill was motivated by practical considerations, it was experienced as 'racial discrimination'. Through impressive lobbying tactics, the Indonesian women's movement had fought even harder than Dutch women and had proven its readiness for a representation. Mrs Neuyen-Hakker, therefore, proposed a motion in

favour of active voting rights for women of all population groups using self-registration as a means to register the voters. Her amendment, which also had the full support of the Association for Women's Interests and Equal Citizenship, was accepted with only three dissenting votes, one 'fundamentalist' from each of the population groups. The protest of the People's Council, a public body that was directly dependent on the vote, rescued the women's franchise; the government went along with the Council's decision.'?' The European and Indonesian press agreed enthusiastically: the bill would give women a more prominent social function, necessary in war time.'?'

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The strong conservatism of the colonial authorities towards the women's franchise in the late '930S raises some questions. Why this die-hard position on an issue that already seemed outdated? Why this discrimination against non-European women in a period where objections against the legal differentiation and discrimination were voiced regularly? After all, the suffrage issue concerned only a tiny minority of the thirty five million female colonial inhabitants, the two percent literate urbanites.

This conservatism was part and parcel of the 'law and order' policies in the decade of the economic world crisis and the international tensions due to the imminent war. It was in accord with colonial policies towards nationalism, which were both repressive towards non-cooperation and uncooperative when nationalism changed directions in the second half of the '930S. Indonesian expressions of sympathy with the Dutch after the German occupation of the Netherlands were received coldly with the postponement of political and administrative reforms until after the war.[103]

Fear of politicisation lay at the foundation of this position, even in the case of women's suffrage. The self-registration of women would spur Indonesian parties to competitive actions inducing more women to register; this struggle for voters would - colonial authorities feared - politicise city life.[104] City council's elections would certainly strengthen the nationalist parties in the educated urban milieu, because the Indonesian women's organisations in favour of the women's voting rights were closely affiliated with the nationalist movement. Those parties were an urban phenomenon anyway, as colonial policies had prevented their extension into rural areas.

The recourse to the *adat* argument was part of this same conservatism. In codified form *adat* law had become the foundation stone of the jurisdiction concerning the Indonesian population group. Yet, in view of the many varieties

of *adat,* the solution of voluntary voting rights in the final bill was a better adaptation to the reality of regional differences than a conservative recourse to the *adat* argument, which would halt all measures of modernisation.

The fear of disturbances of law and order was also evident in the recurrent concern about how Islamic leaders, representing ninety percent of the Indonesian population, would react. These fears were highly exacerbated by strong Islamic responses to the proposed bill on voluntary monogamy in 1937, which was purposely directed at the same social layer of the educated elite women.[105] Protests from a united Islamic front broke out in the summer of 1937, which was nearly the same time when the vote by women was being debated in the People's Council, and caused the withdrawal of the draft. The protests from all over the archipelago illustrated the sensitivity of gender issues in the political and social realm. After 1937, government advisers, anxious to avoid Islamic ire again, acted with more discretion. The influential Adviser on Indigenous Affairs, G. F. Pijper, a co-author of the marriage law, repeatedly pointed out that there was little sympathy for women's suffrage in religious circles. In February 1941, he must have been encouraged by the rejection of a motion on the eligibility of women by the regional Minangkabau Council, dominated by Islamic represcntatives.P" Even as late as October 1941, after the debate and the positive decision by the government, Pijper still concluded that 'proof is lacking that on religious grounds no objections would exist against the introduction of the active right to vote for the Indonesian woman'."?

In spite of his objections, the government switched position. This may be attributed to the fact that women's suffrage - a minor reform - was an expedient instrument to mobilise loyalty and labour in times of war considered more important than the support of a conservative Muslim minority. The government had already requested the assistance of the Indonesian women's movement for the preparation of war. Maria Ullfah Santoso, one of the most important movement's leaders, had been consulted on the issue of local defence. She and other leading women had been invited to express their political demands to the Commission Visrnan, installed to register political complaints.[108] The decision in favour of women's suffrage was a logical outcome.

Prior to that moment, women were only of importance to the colonial state where family life was concerned. This explains the nearly simultaneous introduction of the marriage law proposal, including elite women, and the city council's law, which excluded them. As we saw - it was also the reason behind their eligibility as members of the city council in 1938. Women were only allowed to enter the public realm as responsible mothers and social workers, which would make them 'familiar' and reliable partners in politics.

In the four decades of the struggle for women's suffrage, Indonesian women's organisations had developed from social organisations for education and welfare work into more politically-minded bodies. They too defined themselves as wives and mothers, working harmoniously along with men for development and public good. After winning right to vote, the board of the fourth Indonesian Women's Congress warned women that they should not use their right in a 'undesirable rivalry' with men, pushing them aside, but that they should struggle together with men for the perfection of their country and people. To many of the Indonesian women's organisations femininity thus revolved around harmony and co-operation with (nationalist) men."? Western feminism offered them little.

Its colonial branch was hardly appealing. Colonial feminism 'orientalised' Indonesian women as not yet 'equal to their men', (Razoux Schultz), as 'dominated by adat and religion (Van Overveldt-Biekart), or 'so strongly different' by 'nature and character' (Neuyen-Hakker). Although Kartini had figured prominently in the Dutch perceptions of the '9fOS, colonial feminists of the '920S and '930S lost sight of her and other Indonesian elite women. These class-blind feminist perceptions contrasted with male colonial state ideologies, which usually at least recognised and reinforced class divisions on Java between elite and the rural population. This gender difference may be attributed to the social 'apartheid' of Dutch women. Until the war, was imminent, their social isolation may have been greater than that of men who met men of all population groups in the economic and political 'market' place.

Colonial feminism based its claims for the right to vote for Dutch women on Dutch voting laws in the Netherlands (concordance), on female support to the colonial project, and on the advanced education of Dutch women. Its women constructed whiteness in intellectual and social terms. Moreover, their public self image rested on 'a social motherhood' and 'familial feminism'. It was not tainted (male) party-politics, that attracted them, but participation in social causes on their own terms. They adapted to the male exigencies of a self-fought public struggle for their demands, and proved their political interest in women's suffrage, albeit by requests rather than by numbers. They, however, did not embrace female solidarity across the racial divide of the colony, nor did they see themselves as rescuers of Indonesian women, as British feminists had done earlier. no

Yet in spite of all oppositions, there seemed to exist, at least in the years between the two World Wars, a remarkable general consensus of the basic notions of womanhood and female citizenship among all concerned. In its perceptions of women as mothers, the government, colonial feminism (the

Association for Women's Rights and Razoux Schultz) and the Indonesian women's movement were not far apart. Both Dutch and Indonesian women stuck to 'maternal or familial feminism'. They all proclaimed an interest in the 'proper character' of women. All agreed on rather conservative notions of motherhood, on harmony and cooperation with men, on the restrictions of the vote to a specific class, and on the silently acknowledged fact that women's suffrage would have to be earned as a prize for the struggle by women themselves. But the deeply ingrained race and power differences of Dutch colonialism prevented these shared attitudes from serving as common ground to unite women in the fight for feminist issues.

These debates on women's suffrage thus reveal the limitations of both democracy and feminism in a colonial context. The restrictive, or even caricatured adaptation of democracy in the colony was mirrored in the colonial conservatism of European feminism and in the lare support of this issue by Indonesian feminists. Of the intersecting categories of gender, race and class, class would remain the most restrictive and permanent. While at long last women of all population groups won the right to vote, illiterate women (as well as men) withour property would remain without a political voice. Yet, history would give them no reason to complain. The limited women's suffrage, a bare minimum of citizen's right of the colonial state, would never be exercised. The Japanese victory over the allied armies prevented the elections of 1942. It was only in 1955, that - for the first time – all citizens of the independent Republic Indonesia, regardless of race, class, and gender, would be able to vote in direct, general and free elections. The year 1999 would offer Indonesian women and men the opportunity to cast votes for candidates of their choice for the second time.

Notes

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2 Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History. British Feminists Indian Women and Imperial Culture, I86S-I9Is(Chapel* Hill/London: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Ann Laura Staler, *Race and the Education of Desire. Foucault's History of Sexuality and the*

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3 While the struggles for the female right to vote have scored high on the women's studies agenda in the West, women's suffrage in the non-Western world has until very recently drawn little attention. For colonial Indonesia see Carla Berger, '... Een vrouwenstem-metje... De vrouwenkiesrechtstrijd in Nederlands-Indie 1908-1942' (Unpublished M.A. thesis Department of History, Leiden University, 1990); Susan Blackburn, 'Political Relations among Women in a Multi-Racial City: Colonial Batavia in the Twentieth Century', in: Kees Grijns and Peter J.M. Nas eds., *The Theatre City. Essays on Jakarta/ Bataoia. Socio-Cultural Essays* (Leiden: KITLV Press, forthcoming); Susan Blackburn, Winning the Vote for Women in Indonesia', *Australian Feminist Studies,* 14 (1999) 207-218; Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'The Colonial Heritage of Human Rights in Indonesia: The Case of the Vote for Women, 1916-1941', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 30, 1 (March 1999) 54-73.

4 This was not really late: New Zealand and Australia were the first (1893 and 1901) to give voting rights to women; the Scandinavian countries except for Sweden followed between 1906 and 1915; the great wave came at the end of World War I (United Kingdom, Ireland, Austria, Poland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, Czechoslovakia, and the USA). Women in most Southern European countries had to wait until after World War 11: France (1944), Italy, (1945), Greece (1952). Katarina Tomasevski, *Women and Human Rights* (and imprint; London/Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Zed Books, 1995) 9.

5 G. Forbes, 'Votes for Women: the Demand for Women's Franchise in India, 1917-1937', in: Vina Mazumdar ed., *Symbols of Power: Studies in the Political Status of Women in India* (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1979) 3-23; Joanna Liddle and Rama joshi, *Daughters of Independence. Gender, Caste and Class in India* (London: Zed Books, 1986) 33-38; Barbara Southard, 'Colonial Politics and Women's Rights: Woman Suffrage Campaigns in Bengal, British India in the 1920S', *Modern Asian Studies* 27 (1993) 397-493.

6 *Verslag van de commissie tot bestudeering van staatsrechteliJke hervormingen, ingesteld bij* GB *van I4 september I940, no. rx/Kab.* (further: *Verslag Commissie-Visman)* (2 vols.; Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1941) 143.

7 Ph. Kleintjes, *Staatsinstellingen van Nederlandsch-Indie* (2 vols.; Amsterdam: De Bussy, 1932-1933) 11, 89.

8 Race was reintroduced in anther way, as from 1925 each population group (Europeans, Foreign Orientals and Indonesians) elected representatives from its own racial group.

9 See *Handelingen Volksraad* 1941-1942: Bijlagen 22.4. (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1941-1942); *Verslag Commissie Visman,* I, 92.

IQ An official review of its brief history stated that with regret. *Tien jaar VOlksraadarbeid, I928-I938* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1938) 82-83'

11 M.C. Kooy-van Zeggelen, 'De vrouw in onze Oosr-Indische Kolonien', in: *Van Vrouwenleven 1&J-191J. Ontwikkelingsgang van het leven en werken der vrouw in Nederland en de kokmim* (Groningen: Romelingh, 1913) 155-192, esp. 176-178; M.C. Kooy-van Zeggelen, 'De vrouw', in: *De Koloniale Tentoonstelling Semarang. Tweede Deel* (Batavia: Mercurious, 1916) 3°5-314, esp. *308.* For less than one year the newspaper *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* added a weekly section 'De vrouw in Indie, Orgaan van de Afdeeling Ned.Indie der Nationale Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht'. *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad,* 4 January 1913.

12 M. Nittel-de Wolff van Westerrode, 'Doel en streven van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht', *Koloniale Studien* 1 (1917) 118-123, esp. 118-119; B. van Helsdingen-Schoevers, 'De vrouwenbeweging', in: Idem, *Indie en Europa. Fragmenten. Causcriem en beschouwingen over het leven in Ned-Lndie over de vrouw en het kind en hun belangrijke problemen.* (Leiden, Leidsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1929) 199-204.

13 Susan Blackburn, Western Feminists observe Asian Women: An Example from the Dutch East Indies', in: Jean Gelman Taylor ed., *Women Creating Indonesia. The First Fifty Years* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1997) 1-21.

14 M.C. Kooy-van Zeggelen, 'Nederlandsch-Indie en het vrouwenkiesrecht', in: *Gedenkboek bij het 2s-jarig bestaan van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht 1894-1919* (Amsterdam 1919) 77; Nittel-de Wolff van Westerrode, 'Doel en streven', 12I. In 1913 the Indies Branch had *650* members, of which 175 lived in Batavia.

15 *refaaruerslag van de Afdeeling Deli en Omtrek der Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrechtmaart* 1912 - *september* 191] (Medan: Hallerman, 1914) 2-3. This section was founded by Aletta Jacobs during her Indies' trip.

16 *Handelingen der Staten Generaal Tweede Kamer 1914-191S* (The Hague: Staatsdrukkerij: 1914-1915) Bijlagen 365.3. Also *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1916-1917, 22 (28 September 1916).

17 See *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1916-1917, 22-39; 55-57; 84-96. On Kartini see chapter I.

18 *Ibidem, 28.*

19 See Blackburn, Winning the vote', 214.

20 Aletta Jacobs, 'lets over de geschiedenis der behandeling van het ontwerp "Koloniale Raad"', *Maandblad van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht* 19, no. 11 (IS oktober 1916) 2. juliette van der Heijden, "Het Lichr schijnt overal". De visie van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht op kleur en beschaving, 1894-1919' (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of History, Catholic University Nijmegen, 1998) In its *Maandblad* (Monthly) the Association reported incidentally on the activities of European women in the Indies.

21 Anita de Moor, 'Hoe internationaal was de vrouwenbeweging in Nederland tijdens de eerste feministische golf? Een kwantitatief onderzoek aan de hand van vier vrouwentijdschriften naar de aandacht voor het buitenland, in het bijzonder Nederlands-Indie' (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of History Utrecht University, 1991). Berger, '... Een vrouwenstemmetje'.

22 Colin Brown, 'Sukarno on the Role of Women in the Nationalist Movement', *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs* 15 (1981) 69. For an overview of the many women's

organisations of the first decade of the twentieth century see C. Vreede-de Shiers, *Lemancipation de la ftmme Indonesienne* (Pans/The Hague: Mouton, 1959) 63-67; 'Vrouwenbeweging (Inlandsche)', *Encyclopaedie voor Nedertandsch-Indie* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1935) **VII** 451-455; J. Th. Petrus Blumberger, *De nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-lndii* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1931) 151-163; Kongres Wanita Indonesia ed., *Sejarah Setengah Abad Pergerakan Wanita Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1978) '5-57·

23 *Onderzoek naar de mindere welvaart der Inlandsche bevolking opJava en Madoera. IX bJ. VerhejJing van de Inlandsche vrouw* (Batavia: Papyrus, 1914).

24 Nittel, 'Vereeniging', 120.

25 Kooy-van Zeggelen, 'De Vrouw', 190-191. Kooy-van Zeggelen belonged to the association's members of the first hour.

26 Nittel-de Wolff van Westerrode, 'Doel en streven', 121.

27 *Ibidem,* 122.

28 *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1924-1925, 1586-1588. In the parliamentary debate arguments about the difference in position of indigenous women and their lack of maturity were ignored. The only opponent was a Protestant representative, who spoke about the 'normal development of the woman' and 'her proper place'. His amendment was defeated.

29 *Verslag Commissie- Visman,* I, 143. Other requirements were set up for the election of candidates to city councils: they should be Dutch subjects, living in the city concerned, at least 25 years old and literate in Dutch.

30 Discussing the Minahasa council in 1919, indigenous and European members of the Peoples' Council had expressed their regret that women were excluded from this council, since the Minahasa had long known some equality between men and women. All members (except a Calvinist one) agreed to support a request of the Association for Women's Suffrage in the Indies to grant this right. Since the government had already announced that it would consider this subject, the People's Council left it at that. *Handelingen Volksraad* 1919, 310-316.

31 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1925, Tl, 242. Members of the nationalist party *Budi Utomo,* the Association of Indigenous Civil Servants (PPBB), and Indonesian members of the Netherlands Indies Liberal Alliance *(Nederlandsch-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond,* NI VB) voted for the proposal, while Indonesian members of the Protestant Partij *(Christelijk Etbiscbe Partij,* CEP) and the Political Economic Alliance *(Politiek-Economische Bond,* PEE) opposed it.

32 The government followed its commission on the vote for *desa* and regional councils in West Java and South Sumatra in this respect. *Verslag van de kiesrecht-commissie. Ingesteld bi} gouvernementsbesluit van 16 november 1921 no IX* (Weltevreden: Landsdrukkerij, 1922) 5,57·

33 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1925 ae gewone zitting, ond. 6, stuk 1.

34 The Semarang city council, moreover, had expressed its opposition: the vote for women would collide with Islam and *adat.* Little mention was made of the family, except briefly by the champions of women's voting rights. Women were considered representatives of the family and thus belonged in the councils. *Handelingen Volksraad* 1925, 79-92; 193-195; 234-242.

35 *Verslag kiesrechtcommissie I92I, 136-137.*

36 S. L. van der Wal, *De Volhraad en de staatkundige ontwikkeling van Nederlands-Indid. Een bronnenpublikatie* (2 vols.; Groningen: Wolters, 1964-1965) Il, 89-93.

37 The periodical of the association would appear under different names until 1942: *Orgaan van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht in Nederlandscb-Indie* (1926-1927); *Maandblad van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht in Nederlandscb-lndie* (1927-1931); *Maandblad van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenrechten in Nederlandscb-Indii* (1931-1937); *Maandblad van de Nederlandscb-Indiscbe Vereeniging uoor Vrouwenbelangen en Gelijk Staatsburgerschap (1937-1940); Orgaan van de Nederlandsch-Indische Vereeniging voor Vrouwenbelangen en Gelijk Staatsburgerschap (1940-1941).*

38 Red. Comm. Pasoendan-orgaan, 'Pasoendan Istri', *Jubileum nummer Indonesia. Dertig jaar Perhimpoenan Indonesia I908-I938. Jubileum van het verenigingsorgaan Indonesia,* (n.pl., n.d.) ,89.

39 Late in 1939 the largest Islamic women's associations *Aisyiyah* and the women's section of the *Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia* had a membership of 12.000 members and 6500, while the largest secular organisations *Pasundan Isteri, Isteri Sedar* and *Isteri Indonesia* had 1250,600 and 500 members. 'Lezing Emma Poeradiredja', *MaandbladXl* (1939) no 10,6-7·

40 Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 63-67; 'Vrouwenbeweging', 451-455.

41 Saskia E. Wieringa, *The Politicizasion Of Gender Relations in Indonesia. The Indonesian Women's Movement and Gerwani until the New Order State* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Amsterdam, 1995)73-74·

42 Brown, 'Sukarno', 71-73; Petrus Blumberger, *Nationalistische beweging, 379.*

43 Wieringa, *Potiticization,* 79; Petrus Blumberger, *Nationalistische beweging, 385.*

44 J-M. Pluvier, *Overzicht van de ontwikkeling der nationalistische beweging in Indonesii in de jaren I930-I942* (The HaguelBandung: Van Hoeve 1953) 149; Vreede-de Steurs, *Emancipation,* 66; Gadis Rasid, *Maria Ullfah Subadio, Pembela Kaumnya* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1982). In 1938 she became Maria Ullfah Santoso by marriage. Widow in 1948, she remarried in 1964 to Subadio Sastrosatomo.

45 *De Locomotief* 22 September 1934. I did not find a confirmation of Vreede-de Stuers's remark *(Emancipation,* 68), that in 1935 the reformed and renamed Indonesian women's movement, the *Kongres Perempuan Indonesia,* requested the government to nominate an Indonesian woman to the People's Council.

46 Sections were established in Batavia, Semarang (dissolved in 1936), Madiun, Surabaya (dissolved during the economic world crisis, reorganised in 1937) and Bandung (in 1935). The Association for Housewives was an offshoot of the first, founded by one of its board members, H.].V.O. Kluit-Kelder. See also chapters 3 and 4.

47 'Openingswoord', *Maandblad* **III** 6, April 1929; 'Openingswoord van de waarnemend presidente', *MaandbladV* 6, April 1931.

48 Debates about the name were already being reported in May 1928, but concrete suggestions at the general assembly were rejected at that time. 'Openingswoord', *Maandblad* **III** 6, April 1929: 'Do not stare your self blind at the right to vote', *Maandblad* IV 6, March 1930.

49 H.}.V.O.K.K., 'Is de vereemglllg voor vrouwenrechten een politieke vereeniging?', *MaandbladJX* 12, November 1935. In December 1935, the Association for Housewives in Bandung refused to exchange journals, because they thought it would endanger the politically neutral character of that association. 'Uit de afdeelingen', *Maandblad* IX 13, December 1935.

50 *Maandblad,* passim; also S. van Overveldt-Biekart, 'Het Moederschap', *MaandbladVIII* 8, May '934.

51 Blackburn,' Political relations', 13, 15-17; Some names figure more prominently in the the association's journal. Raden Ayu Adipati Ario Abdoel Rachman, wife of the regent of Mr. Cornelis (Batavia), and chair of the social organisation *Kemajengan Isteri* was a member from 1926 to 1928. She left the association in 1928 when she left with her husband for a European trip; she would not return to the association.

52 'Buitengewone Algemeene Vergadering', *Maandblad* VI 6, March 1932; 'Notulen der Algemeene]aarvergadering op 12 maart 1932', *MaandbladVIII* 7, April 1934.

53 *MaandbladVI,* 8, May 1932. Twice (in 1932 and 1934) the association suggested her (next to one of the European board members) as a candidate for government commissions, without result. In the 1930S Datoe Toemenggoeng also chaired an Indonesian organisation against the trafficking in women and girls, plus the women's organisation of indigenous civil servants, the *Persatuan Isteri Pegawai Bumiputra* (PIPB). She was also one of the board members of the *Sarekat Kaumlbu Sumatra* (Federation of Sumatran Women). Mrs Abdoel Rachman and Mrs Datoe Toemenggoeng were the only Indonesians to contribute to the Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek of 1936. M.A.E. van Lith-van Schreven en].H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp eds., *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek I9J6* (jogjakarta: Kolf-Buning; 1936). The first also joined the board of the Association for Housewives in the Indies, *Maandblad* IV, 3, December 1931. 'Openingsrede', *Maandblad* VI, 7, April 1932; 'Notulen', *MaandbladVIII* 7, April 1934·

54 Sophie van Overveldt-Biekart, and H.J.V.O. Kluit-Kelder, The request of 1930 was accompanied by 1200 signatures; the request of 1934 was supported by the Association for Women's Interest and Equal Citizenship (*Vereeniging ooor Vrouwenbelangen en Gelijk Staatsburgerschap),* the sister organisation in the Netherlands, 'Jaarverslag over het jaar *'935', MaandbladlX* 6, April '935.

55 'Notulen', *MaandbladVlII* 7, April '934; jaarverslag',MaandbladlX 6, April '935.

56 See *MaandbladIV* 2, November 1931; IV 3, December 1931; XI 10, November 1939,

57 M. Stibbe-Knoch, 'Aan de leden', *MaandbladI* 8, JuIy '928.

58 'Notulen van de Algemeene Vergadering, *Maandblad,* IV 7, April 1930.

59 Individual members would be welcome, also as speakers. S. van Overveldt-Biekart (No title), *MaandbladIII* 2, december 1928.

60 H.}.V.O.K.K., 'Samenwerking Oost en West', *MaandbladIX,* 11 October 1935.

61 See ']aarrede 1930', *Maandblad* IV 6, March 1930. Other leading personalities were M. Stibbe-Knoch (chair 1926-1928), H. van der Spek-van Santen (chair 1935-1936), H.J.V.O. Kluit-Kelder (chair 1936-1941). Van der Spek-van Santen and Kluit-Kelder were popular as board members of women's organisations in general; Van der Spek, for instance, also chaired the IEV-VO, section Surabaya, by the late 1930S, Kluit-Kelder, a vc member, chaired the Association for Housewives.

62 *'oooreen onaftienbare toekomst'* and *'een hogeroeping'*. S. van Overveldt-Biekart, 'Uir den Volksraad', *MaandbladII* 10, August 1928.

63 'Buitengewone Algemeene Vergadering', *MaandbladVI* 6, March 1932.

64 M. Stibbe Knoch, 'Urgentievoorstel', *MaandbladVIII* 6, March 1934.

65 Saskia Wieringa, *Politicizing*, 77; see note 62. C. Razoux Schultz Metzer and Kluit-Kelder had a teacher's training. The education of the other Dutch colonial feminists could not be traced.

66 S.v.O.-B., 'De positie van de moderne vrouw', *Maandblad* V n, September 1931. After the communist revolt of19261r927chairwoman M. Stibbe-Knoch had claimed a similar role for women. M. Stibbe-Knoch, 'Aan de leden', *MaandbladI* 8,July 1927.

67 S. van Overveldt-Biekart, 'Het moederschap', *Maandblad* VIII, 8 May 1934. Women should not get politicised *('verpolitieken')*. Or another member earlier on the same issue: 'Additionally we have to work in the small family, as well as in the big, that is named the 'State'. M. Stibbe-Knoch, 'Houdt de lampen brandend', *MaandbladIV* 4,January 1930.

68 The term 'familial feminism' is from Karin M. Offen, 'Depopulation, Nationalism and Feminism in Fin-de Siecle France', *American Historical Review* 89 (June 1984) 654; Forbes, 'Votes for Women', 4.

69 About Razoux Schultz see Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'Cornelia Hendrika Metzer', *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* (The Hague: ING, version 6-n-1997, to be found on http://www.konbib.nlIinfolevlingrgp/werkbestlbwnllemmatalmetzer.html).

70 Van der Wal, *Votksraad., 267*.

71 Locher-Scholten, 'Metzer'.

72 'Rede van Mevrouw Razoux Schultz-Merzer in den Volksraad; Noot van de redactie', *MaandbladJX* 9, August 1935·

73 Van Overveldt's criticism of the Razoux Schultz's demure maiden speech in the People's Council made the latter resign from the association. Berger, 'Vrouwenstemmetje', 69.

74 *Overzicht van de Inheemscheen Maleisch-Chineesche Pers (IPO)* n-S-1935, no. 19,3°0-3°3.

75 *IPO* 7-9-1935, no. 36, 571.

76 Her rejection of the Petition Sutardjo prompted some Indonesian journalists to argue for the inclusion of an Indonesian woman on the People's Council. But they also warned Indonesian political parties to take care of their female members. *IPO,* 17-4-1937, no. 16, 268.

77 *Verslag van de kiesrechtcommissie, ingesteld bi) Besluit van 19 mei 1934 no. 19* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1937) 60,7°,85,94,98.

78 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1937-1938, Bijlagen 55.5.

79 *Hande!ingen Volksraad* 1937-1938,1223-1244,1271-1313.

80 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1937-1938, 1313. Her motion consisted of three parts, one for each of the three population groups. All were accepted, although with varying majorities. The vote for European women got an overwhelming majority: 36-7; the vote for indigenous women was 23-17; the vote for women of the Foreign Orientals 24-17. *Handelingen Volksraad* 1937-1938,1314.

81 S. v. O.-B.,'Vrouwenkiesrecht in den Vaderlandschen Club', *Maandblad* IV 10, August 1930; S.v. O.-B., 'De vc en het vrouwenkiesrecht', *MaandbladX* 3, March 1936, 7-8. The

principle of concordance and Dutch women's important civilising work were reasons to do so;]. Verboom, 'De beginselen der VC en de vrouw', *MaandbladXl,* no 5 (May 1939).

82 Request 1-9-1937 in verbaal (vb.) 14-1-1940, no. 7. Ministry of the Colonies (Con, General State Archive, The Hague, 2.10.36.°4 file 3749.

83 'Schrijven aan den Volksraad', *MaandbladXl* 9, September 1937.

84 L. Hoogesteger-Camman, 'Op audientie', *MaandbladXl* 12, December 1937.

85 Moreover, she wanted voting rights for social issues. 'It necessarily follows from our female constellation, that social matters will attract our attention first and foremost'. Politics was still a tainted phenomenon. *IEV-VO blad,* V 17, 5-9-1937, 321. Indonesian women's organisations did not voice strong arguments, if we are to believe the governmental Indonesian Press Reports *(IPa)* of 1937. Although the *IPa* regularly summarised wishes for an Indonesian female member of the People's Council in those years, it did not report on the People's Council debates in the Indonesian press. This may be due to the fact that there was another gender issue under consideration, the proposed ordinance on voluntary monogamy. See chapter 6 in this volume.

86 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1937-1938, ond. 122; 1604-1616. The government called to attention the 'useful' work of women in general and their concern with social work, education and health in the cities specifically.

87 *Maandblad* Xl 4, April 1939, 12. Indonesian council members were Mrs. Soedirman, the wife of a board member of the *Parindra* (Surabaya), Mrs. Soenarjo Mangoenpoespito, chair of *Isteri Indonesia* (Semarang), Mrs. Emma Poeradiredja, chair of *Pasundan Isteri* and board member of *Pasundan* (Bandung). Mrs. Sri Oemiati, youngest sister of the nationalist Dr. Soetomo (Cheribon) was appointed to a vacant *Parindra* seat in Cheribon in 1941, Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 68; *IPO* 9-7-1941, no 29, 1054. Elected European women were Mrs Puister-Hoedt (BuitenzorglBogor); Mrs Mans-Schreuder (Pasuruan). Women appeared on the lists of various European parties: the Indo-European Alliance *(Indo-Europeesch Verbond),* the Patriotic Club *(Vaderlandsche Club),* the Indies Catholic Party *(Indische Katholieke Partij)* and the Democratic Group *(Democratische Groep).* The Association for Women's Interests and Equal Citizenship had advised its members to enlist in existing political parties; many turned to the Patriotic Club, the party which was still the most positive on the issue. An Indonesian group that presented women was the modernist Islamic party *Barisan Penyedar-PSII.* Berger, '... Een vrouwenstemmetje', 72; *Maandblad* X 7/8, July/August 1938, I; X 9. September 1938, 4.

88 *IPO* 23-4-1938, no. 17, 267; 7-5-1938, no. 19, 299; 20-8-1938, no. 34. 563-565; 'PIPE. De Inheemsche vrouw in den Volksraad', *Maandblad Xl* 7/8, July - August 1938, 5. Maria Ullfah Santosa, founder of Isteri Indonesia, became its chair again in December 1940. *IPO* Il-I-1941, no. 2, Il7. Prior to this, she had been the vice chair of the Committee for the Protection of Indonesian Women and Children. founded in October 1937 to address the marriage issue, to which 28 women's organisations adhered. *IPO* 16-10-1937, no. 42, 692. (See chapter 6) She also chaired the committee on the struggle against illiteracy. She was the first woman to join the Indonesian cabinet after 1945 (1946-1947); became secretary of the prime minister in 1947, and head of his cabinet in 1956. Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 163-164; Gadis Rasid, *Maria Ulifah Subadio.*

89 *IPO* 24-IO-1938, no. 39, 649; 13-5-1939, no. 19, 343-439. The European Patriotic Club had suggested two women, both members of the Indies Association of Women's Interests and Equal Citizenship; they were not elected. *MaandbladX* 10, October 1938, 2.

90 *IPO* 15-7-1939, no 28, 498; 29-7-1939, no 30, 545; 12-8-1939, no. 32, 574. This protest meeting is probably the one Cora Vreede-de Stuers mentions in her book as the one planned for 8 August 1938. At that moment the People's Council's composition was not a subject of discussion. Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation, 69.*

91 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1940-1941, 694 (4 November 1940); 1602 (10 December 1940). *Orgaan* XIII, I January 1941.

92 See letters in vb. 14-1-1940, no. 7, Col, 2.IO·36.04, 3749·

93 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1941-1942, ond. 22.

94 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1941-1942, 1149-1152. Only two members (Soangkoepon and De Raad) had been negative.

95 For the names of the affiliated organisations see *IPO* 22-3-1941, no. 12, 440-441.

96 *Verslag Commissie-Visman,* II, 25

97 *Orgaan* XII 3, June 1940; XIII 5, September 1941.

98 For pleas to end all racial discrimination see also *Verslag Commissie-Visman.*

99 *MaandbladXIII,* 5, August/September 1941.

100 *Handelingen Volksraad* 1941-1942, 1216

101 *Handelingen VOlksraadI914-1942,* 1214-1233; 1286-1319. Government Decision (GB) 20-9-1941, no. IX, mr. 45x/1941, Col., 2.10.45, file 1112. The conclusion in Kwantes, *Ontwikkeling* IV, 724, that the issue had not yet been decided in October 1941, is incomprehensible in view of the decision in the same file from which he selected his source material.

102 *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* 24-9-1941j *De Locomotief26-9-1941; IPO* 12-9-1941, no. 37, 876; 19-9-1941, no. 38,821. Razoux Schultz's organisation IEV-VO, after its rift with the IEV in 1939 renamed in Netherlands Indies Social Women's Organisation (NISVO), remained silent, thus reemphasizing its apolitical character. See *NISVO-blad 1941.*

103 Susan Abeyasekere, *One Hand Clapping: Indonesian Nationalism and the Dutch I939-I942* (Clayton: Monash University, 1976).

104 Kwantes, *Ontwikkeling,* IV, 724.

105 See chapter 6 in this volume.

106 See on this motion, the disapproval of the *Sarikat Kaum Ibu Sumatera* and the following debates: *IPO* 24-8-1940, no. 34, 748;-3-1941, no. 10,365;29-3-1941, no. 13, 448; 19-4-1941, no. 16, 589-590.

107 Kwantes, *Ontwikkeling,* IV, 724.

108 *IPO* 15-3-1941, no. 11,411;8-3-1941, no. 10, 349; 22-3-1941, no. 12, 441.

109 *IPO* 4-10-1941, no 40, 1405. See on this ideal of womanhood, of 'Ibu yang sedan' (real woman), as 'subtle' and as harmony providing wife and mother also *IPO* 30-10-1937, no. *44,* 717 (Pasundan Istri}; 18-12-1937, no. 51, 832; 8-1-1938, no 2, 26; 22-10-1938, no. 43, 712-713 (Taman Siswa); 29-4-1939, no 17, 308 (Parindra); 3-5-1941, no. 18, 665 (Aisyiyah); 27-9-1941, no. 39, 1380 (PPSI) and chapter I.

110 See chapter I.

VI Marriage, Morality and Modernity: The 1937 Debate on Monogamy

INTRODUCTION

'My mother, I and her other children would not return to the regents home in Bandoeng. On April 17' 1917 my grandfather Nawawi received a telegram from my father aboard ship between Colombo and Aden [he was on pilgrimage to Mecca], in which the latter informed him of his wish that his daughter, my mother, should not come back to Bandoeng to take up her position as raden ajoe [the regents wife] (...). *In other words he repudiated my* ***mother.*** [1]

"Where do you comefrom, father? I didn't know at all whether you would ***come.***
He did not answer, put his cane in the corner and looked around the room [of *his daughter, who hadjust born herfirst child}. Soelastri camefrom outside,* ***shekissedthe hand which he stretchedout to her, as shewas usedto doing, and*** *wondered about the tidiness andyouthftlness ofher father's clothing.*
Father took the baby's hand, asked her name and said casually: "Mother, I just married Ratna in Garoet", as if it didn't mean anything.'

In the twentieth **century, educated Indonesian elite women began to seek out** new forms of marriage, which would guarantee them (emotional) equality with their husbands. A modern partnership should prevent the painful experiences - 'out of the blue' - of repudiation and polygamy mentioned above. Their long**ings concurred with the convictions of the Dutch colonial authorities, which were marked by a strong sense of puritanism where sexual and marital relations were concerned.**

During the nineteenth century the European ideal of a stable monogamous marriage was already serving as the measure by which customs of all the popu**lation groups were compared. The extramarital relations of Europeans soldiers** (barracks concubinage) and the cohabitation of Europeans with *nyai* (indige-

nous housekeepers, concubines) were matters of official debate as much as the marital practices (marriage at a young age, polygamy, arranged marriages and divorce) of the indigenous population itself.J With the extension of the colonial state in the 1920S and 1930S, the colonial government tried more actively to change marriage morality to Western norms. In 1937, in order to provide conditions for its ideal of a happy family life, the government proposed a law on voluntary monogamous marriage, which it was forced to withdraw several months later due to a united Islamic opposition.

The struggle around this regulation can be considered to reflect one of the core aspects of colonialism, the cultural collision between coloniser and colonised, between Dutch Christianity and Islam. But the debate was more than a religio-political confrontation. It addressed the fundamental and the literally existential issue of marriage and gender relations. Research in recent debates on Islam has shown how central women and family law were and are in keeping the unity of this religion and forging its boundaries." The debate on the marriage law of '937 offers an early example of this. Marriage and the position of women became the pivotal focus around which politics and ideals of female/male behaviour were formulated. In the draft and the ensuing debate, all parties concerned (the colonial government, Dutch and Indonesian women's organisations, Indonesian nationalism and Muslim parties) voiced their opinions in this respect. All constructed their ideals of sexual politics, of marriage and morality. In doing so they also formulated a desired cultural identity with political implications. Moreover, the debate revealed the shifts in alliances between colonial authorities, Indonesian Muslim organisations and the Indonesian female elite. Women were present on two levels in this issue: as cultural symbols and political pawns in a (male) power struggle, and as active participants in the debate.i

Except for a few short descriptions, the 1937 marriage law has generated little interest.P Yet, a historical analysis is important for more than one reason. First, the draft was intended to protect not only Indonesian elite women from polygamy and repudiation, but European women married with Indonesian (Muslim) men as well. This latter aspect has been overlooked until now: the draft implied a 'construction of whiteness', as it gave European women a specific legal position in marriage.

Secondly, the marriage law proposed a 'classed modernity', because its 'civilising offensive' was aimed at the Indonesian elite and excluded rural women. Nor did it intend to protect Indonesian women involved in concubinage with European or Chinese men (the *nyai),* despite the fact that various Indonesian groups requested a prohibition of the system or a legal arrangement

of their position. Thirdly, its effects for the Indonesian women's movement would be long-lasting: the struggle itself anchored its identity more firmly on Indonesian (Muslim) soil. The gender question of monogamy for a certain class evolved into a religious issue, became political and helped clarify various political positions.

MARRIAGE IN COLONIAL INDONESIA

In Indonesian society being unmarried was considered improper and thus it was unusual for an adult to remain single. Marriage was not only more com-mon but also more communal than it was in the West; the custom of arranged marriage for example, was determined by the group interest of the family?

The legal division of the inhabitants of the Indies in the three population groups dictated different marriage procedures for each population group. Marriages of Indonesians had to be registered by the *penghulu,* or mosque administrator, to become valid and had to be dissolved by divorce through the same civil servant.! Europeans who wanted to marry had to apply at the civil registration office, while for a divorce they had to turn to courts of law.

As a matter of class, polygamy remained restricted to the Indonesian well-to-do and did not concern more than a few percentages of the Indonesian population. Only in the Islamic stronghold Minangkabau, it involved almost 9 percent of the married men. The number of four wives, allowed by the Koran, was seldom reached. Except for the Central Javanese princes, who might have between seven and 77 wives and eo-wives *(selir),* the majority of men practicing polygamy had only two wives.?

Divorce was far more common than polygamy and affected more women from more diverse social backgrounds, especially on Java. The divorce rate here was 5 percent in 1930 (against one-half percent in the Netherlands). Divorce through repudiation (*talâk*) by the man was relatively easy. When he spoke the *talâk* **formula three times, divorce occurred without any alimony requirements.** However, as a result of Indonesian customs *(adat)* and Islamic prescriptions, **women had retained one means to seek a divorce, the *ta'lik,* which seems to have been a prerogative for Islam in Indonesia only.[10] This formula, to be said** by the husband shortly after the wedding ceremony, stated that the woman could seek a divorce if he mistreated her or had not fulfilled certain **conditions.[11]**

The 'evils' of Indonesian family life (marriage at a young age, polygamy, easy divorce, and arranged marriages) had already caused grave European **misgivings in the nineteenth century. State regulations were introduced in 1861 in**

the Christianised sections of the archipelago such as the Minahasa and Ambon. In Java, the Christian communities developed their own marriage regulations based on Western norms (monogamy, independent partner choice, and the marriageable age of 15 for women and 18 for men). In the early twentieth century, Dutch missionaries and civil servants like the government adviser C. Snouck Hurgronje, had expected improvements in marriage conditions through Western education, especially of the elite. Snouck Hurgronje stressed the point that state intervention in marriage legislation would not be wise due to the sensitive nature of Islam on this point. Clairvoyant – or perhaps just well informed – he forecasted that even if the masses did not fully grab certain issues, they would nevertheless be highly sensitive to any warnings from their leaders.[12] Snouck Hurgronje knew indeed what he was talking about: he had been responsible for the elaboration of a colonial Islam policy. Following the separation of State and Church in the Netherlands, he had advocated a separation between Islamic religious beliefs and practices and its feared (international) political implications. The colonial government would be wise not to intervene in the domain of marriage and family law, where Islamic law should be respected.v

In line with this liberalism, Snouck Hurgronje encouraged a middle-class Western family lifestyle for Indonesians of the elite. Or, as he maintained in 1911: as a result of Western education Javanese women would cooperate with their *priyayi* husbands 'to bring the Native family to an association with our family system' . He also appealed to Europeans to accept Javanese girls as boarders in their homes and families in order to stimulate monogamy and improve the education of their future children.I"

Change and modernisation through education was a common theme among both the colonising and the colonised elite in the first decades of this century. Modern ideals were not only a Western prerogative and colonisers were not the only ones to frown upon Indonesian marital practices. Indonesian elite women joined the choir of Western critics and strongly inspired it.

INDONESIAN REQUESTS

Early feminism in Java professed similar views on issues of the family. Raden Ajeng Kartini, who struggled vigorously against polygamy, wrote:

> *The life path of young favanese girls is clearly marked out and formed according to only one model. We can not have ideals; the only dream we may dream is: today or tomorrow to be the umpteenth wife of some man or anotber.]...}*

> *Is it not natural that I should hate, despise marriage if it results in the inequality of women in such a gruesome way? [...] Come women, young girls, stand up, let us join hands and let us work together to change these unbearable conditions.*[15]

Kartini did not doubt the value of marriage itself, but approved of it only on certain conditions. However, as was mentioned before, she was not able to live up to her own ideals, as she entered into a forced polygamous marriage and died in childbirth.'[16]

A decade later, Indonesian nationalists took up her ideas as they were published in her letters in 1911. Nationalist organisations such as Young Java *(fong Java)* and the *Sarekat Islam* in the 1910s fulminated against polygamy, child marriage, and the sexual mores of Europeans, which affected Indonesian women via concubinage and prostitution. Western-trained intellectuals in Young Java opted for monogamous marriages at an older age. These nationalist organisations even founded marriage associations which forbade their members to marry before a man had reached the age of 25, a woman the age of 18, and prescribed monogamy. The modern role model of the nationalists in the first decades of the twentieth century looked much like Western family life.[17]

Elite women, trained along western lines, voiced similar notions. The nine Javanese women, who listed their feminist wishes in a government report in 1914, were unanimous: they rejected polygamy, child marriage and forced marriage. Or, as one of them stated: 'Members of one family should form a unit. In a family no divisions should exist. This can only be attained when one woman is heading the household." These women also expected great change from education as the vehicle of modernity. None of them went as far as to demand a legal prohibition of polygamy, as a progressive European civil servant, H.E. Steinmetz, in that same report did.[19] Javanese *Regents* (indigenous rulers) and European members of the commission Steinmetz chaired, rejected his proposal.

THE DEBATE OF THE 1920S AND 1930S: THE INDONESIAN PERSPECTIVE

In the 1920s and 1930s, the debate on marriage intensified, mostly via Indonesian women's organisations. Marriage was one of the main subjects elaborated at the first Indonesian Women's congress of 1928, a congress of thirty women's organisations. The congress approved a resolution requiring a strengthening of

the conditional repudiation, the *ta'lik.* At the wedding the *penghulu* should explain bride and groom its purposes more extensively. The second congress of '935 decided to study the position of women according to Islamic law and to improve their conditions, within the realm of this law. A research commission was installed to study the matter.s" Research was the ultimate common ground that could possibly unite all Indonesian women's organisations, religious as well as non-religious. For the moment, the *ta'lik* would offer a temporary solution to marriages problems."

Indonesian women's organisations were divided. The most progressive and nationalist *Isteri Sedar* (The Conscious Woman, 1930) opposed every form of polygamy, while *Isteri Indonesia,* (The Indonesian Woman, '932), chaired by Maria Ullfah Santoso," held similar opinions but articulated them in more moderate terms. Islamic women's organisations, such as the reformist *Aisyiyah,* and the women's organisation of the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII) had their own positions. These (women's) organisations strengthened the notions of an Islamic identiry among women and attempted to outline Islamic ideas concerning modernity, including its position on women. *Aisyiyah,* for instance had founded women's mosques in various cities in Java, claiming equality with men in religious practices. Its journal stated that no religion had provided women with more rights than Islam.[23] In '932 it spoke out in favour of polygamy on the moral grounds that it prevented illicit sexual relations and prostitution. The *Sarekat Kaum Ibu Sumatra* (SKIS, Federation of Sumatran Women), however, which was also influenced by its Islamic membership, opposed polygamy, while the Young Islamic Alliance *Uong Islamieten Bond,* JIB) shared this opinion but preferred remedies through research and the reform of Islamic practiccs.r' Indonesian women were thus divided on the subject: nationalists and secular feminists versus Islamic organisations, who were themselves not unified either. Those who considered Islamic law the issue that needed amending, opposed those, who thought it was mostly a misinterpretation of essentially 'good' Islamic laws that caused the abuses. These opposing opinions would remain central to the argument in the following debate as well. The draft on voluntary monogamy thus touched on raw nerves.

THE COLONIAL GOVERNMENT'S POSITION

Why then did the colonial government in 1937 leave the road of education for improving marriages that Snouck Hurgronje had mapped out? Why did it decide in favour of this bill? It had indeed stuck to Snouck's advice in the case of child marriage and had referred this subject to private organisations. But it

was not fundamentally opposed to marriage legislation for specific groups of Indonesians, as the 1933 bill on the marriage regulation of Indonesian Christians proved. A short history of the debates concerning both topics may shed some light on our issue.

In the early 1920S, European civil servants who had run into blatant examples of child marriage, indignantly tried to encourage the government to prohibit this 'evil'. The soothing voice of the Adviser of Native (i.e., Islamic) Affairs, Ernst Gob"e, had deviated their efforts. His office, the Office for Native Affairs *(Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken)*, had been installed around 1900 to study the political and religious matters in the Indonesian and Arabic communities and to report back directly to the Indies government. It focused on Islamic matters, as its popular name *Kantor Agama* (Office of Religion) indicated, and had many contacts within the Islamic world (with *penghulu, kyai* and Islamic political leaders). For strategic reasons it maintained a 'low profile' and worked behind the scenes.'5 Gobee refused direct interference in the practice of child marriage. Although child marriage was still fairly common in rural Java, it was not to be condemned as long as its sexual consummation was postponed until the girl had reached puberty; this *kawin gantung* could be compared to a Western betrothe!' Only if consummation took place immediately after the wedding ceremonies, could there be a question of 'rape within marriage'. But how would the government or local civil servants ever ascertain the distinction if the families encouraged cohabitation of the couple?'6

For political and practical reasons Gobee thus advised against direct measures by the colonial government.[27] He favoured education, the dissemination of information and governmental fact finding to counter this type of abuse. Hence, in 1925 and 1927 the government informed the Regional Heads of the Administration of its need for information and statistics." But in 1932 it put an end to these fact finding efforts also, because the received statistics on the matter had proven to be inaccurate. Moreover, overly active Indonesian officials had perpetrated other abuses, sometimes even engaging in physical examinations of future brides to determine whether she had reached puberty.[29] Since child marriage was a declining institution anyway, the issue was turned over to private initiative: women's and nationalist organisations were asked to disseminate information against it, in which they would be supported by Dutch civil servants.[30]

The colonial government, however, was not opposed to direct interference with marriage life in principle. It had, for instance, ordered the *penghulu* to explain the significance of the *ta'lik* to the representative of the bride at the wedding, as requested by the first Indonesian Women's Congress.[31] In 1933 it had

passed the Marriage Ordinance of Christian Indonesians in Java, the Minahasa and Ambon through the People's Council *(Volksraad).* This bill, the result of a fifty years debate, contained only a bare minimum of stipulations - monogamy **for Christians, free partner choice, civil registration and marriageable age limits** of '5 years for girls and 18 for boys. Divorce was allowed on several conditions and was to be decided by the judge. All matters concerning bride prices, endo- or exogamy, and property rights within the marriage remained subject to existing *adat* regulations.[32] This liberal draft thus left the positive rights of Indonesian women unharmed, but now also protected them against child marriage, arranged marriages, and one-sided divorce. It was this law that set the example for the '937 marriage draft.

Hence, when the government acted in 1937, it did so in line with a long standing discussion on marriage patterns, with its ideas on (restricted) government interference, with its former 1928 support of Indonesian **women's organisations** (the strengthening of *ta'fik* procedures), and with its own moral preoccupations. Or, as G.F. Pijper, one of the civil servants closely involved with the draft process, wrote:

> *Real development ('ware ophe.ffing) of the people can only be achieved by moral means, and improvement of actual marriage morals is one of the most ftrceful means.*[34]

The decisive impulse for this draft, however, did not come from Batavia but from The Hague. In '93', the request from the Minister of the Colonies, H. **Colijn, to improve the marriage law for European women who married** Indonesian (Islamic) men, tipped the scale in favour of intervention. His intention **to protect these women from polygamy set the Indies government in motion.**

THE Two ORIGINS OF THE DRAFT

The draft indeed focused on two groups: those who preferred an interracial **marriage (with inter-religious consequences) and those Indonesians who** desired monogamy. In the (limited) historiography on this subject the Muslim **protests against monogamy have overshadowed the racial connotations of the** draft; all the more reason to pay attention to this aspect of the mixed-marriage regularion.u

According to a regulation from 1896, a European wife had to 'follow' her husband. This implied that a European woman who married an Indonesian

man, became a Native law subject and could be confronted with polygamy and repudiation. When she married in the Netherlands, a Dutch woman could not even recur to the *ta'lik*, the conditional repudiation formula, that granted her the right to ask for a divorce. Moreover, in general she might be ill-informed and might not know what kind of future to expect after her coming to the Indies)6

In the late nineteenth century the number of European women in racially and religiously mixed marriages was a mere trifle: two percent of all European married women only. Although orthodox Islam itself does not allow inter-religious marriage of a Muslim man and a non-Muslim woman, these marriages did occur.[37] In the '920S and '930S their number expanded slightly, notably by marriages of Dutch women to Indonesians who had temporarily been in the Netherlands to study." But even if the question could still be considered as highly theoretical, it was the visibility of these Dutch women, that moved the issue to the forefront and aroused European interest and unrest.

It assembled a wide range of Dutch (colonial) groups. Minister Colijn had come to his request through pressure from different directions: by an article written by a lawyer from the Batavian Law School, J. Kollewijn, by questions put forward in the People's Council, by female representatives in the Dutch Parliament, and by European feminists. Kollewijn, a member of the moderate progressive *Stuw* group, was moved by moral and legal concerns. Or, as he reported in 1930, c··· since it concerns high moral interests, the possibility that problems might arise, is reason enough to consider whether the law should not be changed')9 Female members of the Dutch Parliament (present in this council for only a decade at that time) wanted to protect their European sisters, while similar worries moved the conservative colonial feminists of the Association for Women's Rights in the Indies *{Vereeniging voor Vrouwenrechten in Nederlandsch-Indie).4*[0] This organisation expressed its deep concern for the lot of these women repeatedly in the early '930S; it had even demanded that the central feminist organisation in the Netherlands inform Dutch women who wanted to marry 'Natives' about their fitture.e' In '933, the Netherlands-Indies Fascist Alliance *(Nederlandsch-Indische Fascisten Bond)* also joined in, demanding a prohibition of this type of marriage on purely racist grounds." The Calvinist Colijn was a fervent champion of a legal regulation in favour of monogamy for moral motives (a proper marriage life). Thus for legal, moral, social, religious and racist reasons a wide range of European groups - both in the Netherlands and in the Indies, both male and female, from the political left to the extreme right - voiced the same goal: the protection of European women against polygamy.

It was the ministerial request, mentioned above, that the Indies authorities combined with their desire to influence Indonesian family life. At the end of '932, two years after the first question from 'The Hague', J.J. Schrieke, head of the Department ofJustice, informed the Minister that he was willing to draft a bill. However, he intended to broaden its reach in view of the repeated demands by Indonesian women's organisations to act against polygamy and repudiation - more than once in the 1920s, the government had received 'discrete' requests to do so. The draft should include not only mixed married couples, but all those who desired monogamy. They should be able to contract a voluntary'Indies civil marriage'. As to the draft's stipulations, the bill should be comparable to the marriage law of Christian Indonesians, and should be introduced after the latter. The postponed introduction of the Marriage Ordinance of Christian Indonesians, which ultimately became law in January '937, the economic crisis and the 'extremely touchy character' of the measure itself caused a delay of years. It thus remained in the planning stages for some time. In spite of repeated questions the Minister had to wait until the end of '936, before he received a draft.[43]

This draft intended to offer an opportunity to contract a monogamous marriage with divorce granted only through a court decision, which would provide Indonesian women with more guarantees of a marriage's longevity. It also pertained to other combinations of inter-religious matches, such as Balinese Hindus and Muslims. It contained three main clauses: monogamy; divorce through court decision; and the alimony to be paid by the man to be decided by the court. Minimum ages were similar to those of European civil law and of the Marriage Ordinance of Christian Indonesians: 15 years for the wife, 18 for the husband. The grounds for divorce also followed the Christian Indonesians' model, including deliberate abandonment, irreparable discord, and polygamy.[44]

The draft's two origins were expressed in the intended law subjects: the regulation would be obligatory for marriages between European women and Indonesian men, while others could join voluntarily. Because of the requirement that these marriages be registered at the civil registration instead of with the *penghulu*, the draft bill was named the 'Draft Ordinance on Registered Marriages'."

INTERSECTION OF GENDER, RACE AND CLASS

The draft protected women. Monogamy was required, repudiation made impossible, and divorce relegated to the courts. The preconditions for the Western ideal of a stable family were incorporated into the law. But the draft

implied more. Gender ideals of equality between man and woman prevailed. Both could request registration, even three months after the wedding. Both could ask for a divorce, and on the same grounds. This Western equality ideal was not even hindered by those European law stipulations which were disadvantageous to women. Indonesian women would keep their already existing autonomy in matters of property and inheritance, because the existing indigenous laws would remain in force in all matters not resolved in the ordinance. Combining the best of 'East' and West', the draft was a woman-friendly proposal.

But friendly to which women? The positive notion of gender interfered with categories of race and class. European women had to be protected from Muslim abuse in inter-religious marriages, which was the first incentive to the proposal. As far as Indonesian women were concerned, the government aimed to reach the 'upper 10,000' of the Westernised elite, the young, educated, mostly unorthodox nominal Moslems *(abangan)* in the cities, who would submit to the future bill voluntarily. The authorities wanted to 'lend a hand' to the renewal from within. Besides supporting women's demands, there may have been fantasies about white men rescuing brown women from brown men, which may have influenced this position as well. But these were not reported in contemporary sources.[46] The draft was part of a civilising offensive, which drew elite women and men more firmly into the sphere of Western family life. The expansion of modernity implied the Westernisation of the Indonesian elite, which would strengthen the colonial state, with the family as its cornerstone.

As Ann Stoler has shown, the 1896 bill on racially-mixed marriages had a divisive influence. It stimulated the debate about who was European and who was not and had reinforced the legal borderlines between Europeans and 'Natives'r'? This draft, based on the former bill, would create another identity, an in-between group of modern 'monogamists'. The colonial government thus underscored existing class divisions within Indonesian society, between elite and rural masses in its marriage policies. While earlier debates about child marriage had focused on customs among the rural population that would be left untouched by modernity, the 1937 draft concerned elite women who were or might want to be 'converted'." With lines of racial differences among women becoming blurred, those of religion (and class) among Indonesians would emerge as more distinct. That the Indonesian community was also aware of it, would turn out to be more obvious after the draft was made public.

INDONESIAN REACTIONS

Realising the possible emotional impact of *kafir* (heathen) interference with such a fundamental religious aspect as Islamic marriage itself, the government launched the draft into the public sphere. It consulted feminist, nationalist, and Islamic organisations before introducing it to the People's Council. This procedure opened an intense inter-Indonesian debate, in which Europeans remained on the sidelines.e? The European press would not even raise the implications for European women who married Indonesians. In view of the general Muslim prohibition of inter-religious marriage, that would certainly have fed the flames.

On a Sunday morning in June 1937, the Adviser for Native Affairs, Ernst Oobee received twenty Indonesian ladies in his home in Batavia to discuss the draft. It was highly unusual, such a meeting in the private sphere about a public concern. Was it because this issue was situated on the border of the public and private domain, because its character was too sensitive to be discussed in his office, or because his guests were women who might react more positively in an informal atmosphere? We can only guess.

From left to right: Maria Ullfah Santoso, Mrs Chaelan Syamsu, Mrs Datoe Toemenggoeng 1938 (Coil. J. Suryakusuma/Pusar Dokumenrasi Guntur).

These women were the cream of the crop among their kind and were accustomed to public appearances. They represented the most important women's organisations such as the *Kongres Perempuan Indonesia, Taman Siswa, Isteri Indonesia, Isteri Sedar, Pasundan Isteri* (PASI), and the *Sumatran Sarikat Kaum Ibu Sumatera* (SKIS).'o Gobee had arranged the meeting to sound out feminist reactions. He could be satisfied by what he heard. According to his report of the meeting, the participants were unanimously positive. Most of them greeted the draft 'with joy'; although to some it did not go far enough, because the masses would not be affected. It would become the task of the women's organisations to spread its influence to a broader public." A few women remained more hesitant. By the end of the meeting they admitted, that not all Indonesians would be that enthusiastic. Some referred to the argument of the Young Islamic Alliance (jra) who wanted marriage to be reformed within the boundaries of Islam itself; from an Islamic viewpoint the ordinance was unnecessary. But all agreed that polygamy in practice deviated from polygamy in theory.

This meeting was a highly positive first sign; but then all hell broke loose. In June, the combined Islamic organisations of Pamekasan (Madura) came together in a protest meeting. In that same month the *Nahdatu/ U/ama* (NU) held its twelfth congress in Malang (East Java). The NU was founded in 1926 as an apolitical, theological organisation of orthodox Muslims, *kyai* and *u/ama,* (teachers and preachers). They were the honoured religious leaders of the rural millions in Java, who influenced the conservative and traditional Islamic part of the population and used to spread the NU congress decisions in the country side. The congress unanimously rejected the Draft Ordinance on Registered Marriages. The government clearly wanted to put an end to polygamy, but had attacked 'the holiness and perfection of Islam'. However glad the congress was that it had been consulted, it totally spoke out against the content of the measure.

The government did little to contradict this protest or to defend its proposal. Asked for the motives behind the ordinance Adjunct-Adviser G.F. Pijper, who was present at the congress, replied meekly that the question was not easy to answer, and that at this moment only the reactions of Muslims were important. 'If however, the Muslim majority offered objections, the draft would not reach the People's Council', a very weak reply indeedY

It did not stem the tide. Protests spread rapidly in the following months. All over the archipelago, from Aceh to Ambon, it became a burning topic, discussed in meetings inside and outside, in mosques, journals and periodicals.n In the People's Council some Indonesian members raised the issue in July; it was hoped that the draft would 'never but never' reach the Council itsel£54

Traditionalists and reformists, political and *abangan* Islam, men and women, united in defending Islamic marriage. In Medan, the nationalist Rasoena Said, **the principal of a girl's school, chaired a commission of women's organisations** against the ordinance. She recognised the evil of polygamy, but protested against the state interfering in Islamic law, which she considered justifiable only in cases of concubinage with a *nyai*.[55] In the Minangkabau, where - as we **saw -- polygamy was the most common, a new *adat* council was established in** reaction to the draft.[56] Organisations like the Indonesian branch of *Ahmadiyah* and the reformist movement *Muhammadiyah* joined the NU, as did the nationalist Islamic parties, the *Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia* (PSII, with 40,000 members the largest Islamic nationalist organisation), its small, more governmentally minded offshoot *Barisan Penyedar!pslI*, and the Young Islamists Alliance U1B).57The protest managed to mobilise huge masses of up to 10,000 believers to local meetings of combined Islamic organisations. In September 1937 the **protest movement even reached Mecca. Here a Protest Council against the** Ordinance on Registered Marriages *(Badan Penolakan Ordonnantie Nikah Bercatat)* was founded. It assembled the Indonesians in Mecca, and sent requests to authorities in the Netherlands and the Indies, as well as to Indonesian princes, who legally were heads of Islarn.f Their requests never reached **the colonial archives, but other requests did -- for instance one from the Com**mittee Oemmat Islam Poerworejo. Queen Wilhelmina, the Prime Minister **and the Parliament received a petition to withdraw the ordinance, signed in the name of the 8000 persons present at a mass meeting in Purworejo (Central** Java). It was also supported by the *penghulu* organisation of Java and Madura, *Perhimpunan Penghulu dan Pegawainya*.[59]

ISLAMIC ARGUMENTS

There were many sides to the argument. The most traditional among the protesters like the NU proclaimed that Islamic marriage laws had come directly from God, and as such were holy and perfect. They did not forbid monogamy. It was repeated over and over again that polygamy itself had been introduced **for specific reasons to protect widows and orphans and as a solution to a female population surplus. Moreover, it served the purposes of procreation, - a wife's** infertility was a reason to take a second wife -- and guaranteed 'a perfect progeny,60

Besides reasons of compassion and demography, sexual morality implications were strongly underlined. Revealing critical male self-knowledge, the debate deployed notions of male sexuality and the dangers that would ensue, if

this remained unregulated. Monogamy, as European examples revealed, resulted in illegal relations outside the marriage and prostitution. As if that oldest female profession didn't exist in colonial Indonesia, one discussant at a protest meeting in Probolinggo even quoted the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer: 'This is London: 80,000 girls have become the victim of monogamy'.[61] Polygamy, therefore, was 'in the interest of young girls'[6] Islam 'wants open relations no secret liaisons, that ruin society', as was stated at the psn-congress. Monogamy only stimulated 'abortion and infanticide, created inferior children and bastards', in short 'moral decadence'. Polygamy was thus legitimated as a protection of women by men from male sexuality.

Next to moral considerations, state interference with Islamic laws served as an argument for the protesters. Only in two cases might this be allowed: in prohibiting prostitution and concubinage and in fixing the remuneration of local *penghulu*, whose income was based on the number of marriages and divorces he performed and who thus profited from easy divorce. During the debate, the aforementioned grievance against the *nyai* received a new stimulus. Not European women, but Indonesian women needed to be protected by law.[63] Yet, the colonial state should abstain from interfering in sensitive religious issues such as marriage itself. More abstract arguments dealt with the relationship between State and Church, and the policy of religious neutrality. According to Agus Salim of the BP-PSII and others, state interference in religious matters was forbidden unless when law and order was at stake. The Indies constitution had guaranteed the autonomy of native institutions, making this governmental interference illegal.[64]

The Indonesian section of *Ahmadiyah* and others voiced more theological grievances with regard to the relationship between state and religion. The ordinance stated that for all aspects, not mentioned in the ordinance, *adat* laws would prevail (art. I, sub 2); this implied that *adat* including Islamic law were secundary to the ordinance regulations and that the ordinance would supersede over Islamic law. This was unacceptable to the true believer. The voluntary character of the ordinance did not make it any more acceptable. What was allowed *(murbah)* by the Koran, could not be forbidden *(haram)* by the state. The government would thus encourage Muslims to act against the Koran and ultimately promote apostasy, a deadly sin.[65]

Many Muslims, however, agreed with the purpose of the government to improve marriage conditions of Indonesian women and recognised abuses such as the number of divorces in Indonesia. However, Islam, if taught correctly, offered solutions tot this problem. Interference by a colonial 'non-believing' government was not required. The ordinance - it was feared - would only fos-

ter antagonism between Islamic groups on the one hand and secular nationalists and feminists on the other.[66]

The political and religious context of that period provides some more explanations for the vehemence of the Islamic protests. In the colonial period, the influence of Islamic law (based on Koran and *sharia)* was restricted to family matters; hence the draft impinged on an already limited domain of Islamic influence. Moreover, it touched upon a core value of Islamic law and the very essence of Islamic identity, the private sphere. That sphere was to be defended by personal or Islamic law, as present-day developments in various Islamic countries prove as well.[6)] The Muslim family and women's place within it were symbols of what it meant to be a true Muslim in a period where Muslim identity was confronted with, or even threatened by three specific challenges: colonial measures, a new impetus for unity in secular nationalism and international developments in the Middle East. To start with the first: in that same summer of '937, the colonial government had limited the authority of the Islamic courts: it had withdrawn matters of inheritance from Islamic to secular jurisdiction. Opposition in the People's Council had not been influential enough to prevent this measure from being enacted. If Islamic jurisdiction over matters of inheritance was taken away, due to colonial steadfastness, marriage according to Islamic values was to remain untouched.

Secondly, by the '920S Islam had lost its dominant position in Indonesian nationalism, which had been taken over by secular parties. Weakened in the early '930S by persecution and splintering, these parties had recently gained ground again through the merging of nearly all the splinter groups into two large parties, the *Parindra* ('935) and the *Gerindo* ('937)' They offered an example of the possibilities of unity. Thirdly, the international developments around Palestine in the second half of the '930S (the Arab Revolt and the Partition debates) had made Muslims in Indonesia even more sensitive to threats of their position.f" The marriage question thus came as a highly welcome gift, because it could serve Islamic unity and provide an answer to Muslim uncertainties.

SECULAR CRITICISMS

What counter-arguments could Indonesian feminism and secular nationalism put forward? From the beginning of the public debate, intellectuals, both male and female, had expressed their opinions in public. The authors Sanusi Pane and Soewarsih Djojopoespito, for instance, articulated their support for the draft: Islam did not prohibit a voluntaty vow of monogamy. 69 Secular national-

ist parties such as *Parindra* and the newly founded leftist party *Gerindo,* waited longer before taking positions. In December '937, *Parindra* rejected the proposed text, while *Gerindo* declared itself neutral in religious matters. *Gerindo* recognised the need of solid marriage regulation as a matter of public and religious interest, but this should match public sentiments on the issue. Since the ordinance did not, *Gerindo* demanded a new regulation in line with Islamic law.?? Siding with the Islamic cause, these main nationalist parties thus called for an all-Indonesian solution to the marriage issue.

The only semi-nationalist organisation which had reacted favourably to the draft at an early stage (August '937), was the *Pakempulan Kawulo Ngayogyakarto* (PKN, Association of the Subjects of Yogyakarta), a court organisation in Yogya, which counted more than 200,000 members. To its chairman, prince Pangeran Soerjodiningrat, the ordinance Ca happy event') could elevate the position of women in complete accordance with the struggles of his organisation. Both he and the chair of the PKN'S women's branch, Raden Ayu Hadikoesoerno, considered its content in line with Islamic law. If, however, the draft would prove to be incompatible with Islam, the PKN would turn around and fight it. So probably, the PKN joined the protesters later in the year.?'The draft thus did not cause the expected split between secular nationalism and Islamic organisations. Nationalism, although basically in favour of the ordinance, adapted gracefully to general Islamic sensibilities.

Secular women's organisations followed suit. In view of numbers and politics, they could hardly behave differently. Mrs Soewarni Pringgodigdo *(Isteri Sedar)* and Maria Ullfah Santoso *(Isteri Indonesia)* remained faithful to their earlier positive reactions. The *Isteri Sedar* congress of July '937 spoke out in favour of the draft, just as *Putri Budi Sejati* and the *Sarekat Kaum Ibu Sumatera* had done.> Mrs Mangoensarkoro of the smaller *Kerukunan Kaum Istri* reacted Iikewise.:" They all defended the ordinance's gender equality and praised the elimination of the humiliating practice of polygamy. However, as a minority within the *Kongres Perempuan Indonesia,* they had to reckon with a divided women's movement. The women's section of PSII and *Aisyiyah* were avid advocates of polygamy.?4 Therefore, in September '937, some women's leaders (among others Mrs Pringgodigdo, Maria Ullfah Santoso and Mrs Mangoensarkoro) founded a Committee for the Protection of Indonesian Women and Children (*Comité Perlindungan Kaum Ibu dan Anak-Anak Indonesia,* CPKIAI). The committee supported the intent of the ordinance, but expressed a desire to amend it 'not in opposition to Islam' and based on 'humanism and morality'.z In short, a more Indonesian draft. All in all, the interest for a united Indonesian women's movement prevailed over govern-

mental marriage reforms. The woman's movement had also learned its lessons from the *Bangoen* affair, a mini-Rushdie affair *auant la Iettre.*

THE BANGOEN AFFAIR

In October r937 at the height of the public outrage regarding the draft ordinance, a publication in the Parindra affiliated bi-monthly *Bangoen* had resulted in fanning the flames of Islamic indignation even more. At the request of the **editors, a woman journalist, Siti** Soemandari, **had written in Dutch in favour of** the marriage ordinance.[76] The language, style and content of her publication **revealed her as a member for whom the ordinance was intended; she was educated, urban and an *abangan* Muslim. Yet, she was not a member of one of the 'ladies-organisations', but 'the Woman who had understood the terrible atrocities** of the present system', as the editor introduced her.[77]

In her opinion the ordinance was 'a perfect revolution'. Putting an end to polygamy and arbitrary repudiation, it would also put an end to male power **within marriage. Siti Soemandari proved her mystical inclinations in a** metaphorical explanation of the polygamy verses in the Koran, which - according to her - should be read as symbols of an inner path for both man and woman. She also claimed that Islam did not prefer one gender above the other. It was, after all, 'the True Religion of Mankind'. According to her, Mohammed would have offered other marriage laws had he been alive in the present day. Although he was the Holy Prophet, he was neither God himself nor the religion itself He had been a man of flesh and blood, especially when it came to **women; which she tried to illustrate with some critical examples of his sexual** behaviour. In view of the many abuses inherent in polygamy and the weakness of men, she expressed her satisfaction with the helpful hand of the government and hoped that it would remain steadfast in its stance.

Needless to state - as she did say - she did not set out to debunk the Prophet. She had just touched upon a highly sensitive issue, the marital life of Mohammed himself One of her sentences, quoted out of context, named him an 'old (jealousr) prophet', who had committed adultery with Mary the Coptic. That proved to be fatal. *Bangoen* had published her article in four installments and would have continued to do so, had public opinion not interfered. The **serialised article drew the attention of the newly founded Research Committee** of the Islamic Press Association *(Comite Penyelidikan Persatuan Pers Islam),* who publicised her 'offensive' sentences and demanded a public apology. Then the Islamic press started to verbally threaten her. Private letters announced the cutting of her tongue, wished her long-lasting illnesses or menaced to kill her.

At least she had earned 'a sound flogging' or a 'bath in the pond of the mesjdid (local mosque)'. In December, in response to a request from the Islamic Press Association, Parindra chairman Soetomo fired the editor-in-chief Soetopo and Soeroto, the editor responsible for publishing the articles. The latter had tried to defend Siti Soemandari as an upstanding female whose ideal was to be a mother and a wife, and 'not some office stool'. But this was besides the point of the Islamic fury. The scandal had nothing to do with the politically correct gender identity of the author, but everything with the fact that she had implicated the Prophet himself in this issue)'

Siti Soemandari and Soeroto published their defence in December. The arguments they put forward did not quell the anger either. They stated that they did not hate Islam; that they saw Mohammed as a human being of less importance than his mighty doctrines; that they had been attacking conservatism and polygamy and not Islam. It merely exposed them as progressives ignorant of the unbreakable tie between the Prophet and Islam. Again, mass meetings of thousands of Indonesians in, for instance, Batavia, were held to protest against the insult of Islam itself. In about ten cities across the archipelago, Councils for the Defence of the Islam *(Comite Pertahanan Islam)* were founded. Ironically, the same government that had been considered at fault by editing the original draft, was now being asked to interfere on behalf of Islam and to seize copies of *Bangoen* in question.Z?

In late December '937 Siti Soemandari and Soeroto had steadfastly refused to offer public apologies. A few weeks later they had to make a *volte-face;* probably because the pressure on them had become too strong. In January '938 they pleaded guilty and published their apologies. They stated that they had researched their information in faulty (Dutch) literature; that they had met the force of Islam and recognised the will of the Indonesian population. Now they had learned their lesson and had come to new conclusions. In a follow-up, the father of Siti Soemandari publicly offered his apologies for the behaviour of his daughter. The Islamic Press Association graciously accepted the apologies and considered the subject closed.[80] The government did the same.

This affair of the late '930S illustrates the fighting power and resolution of Indonesian Islam at the time. The Draft Ordinance on Registered Marriages and the *Bangoen* affair strengthened Islamic positions, which had in the recent past been hit by other colonial legislation. Nationalism and feminism, although in favour of marriage reform, did not want or even dare to confront the Islamic leaders because of their popular support. Islam set the tone in regard to female interests and family matters. Women's support for the colonial government legislation concerning an essential aspect of life in general and Islam in partic-

ular (marriage and family) would have estranged the elite groups from the Muslim movement, leaders and population. Indonesian women preferred unity among their ranks.

CONSEQUENCES

The debate on the Draft Ordinance on Registered Marriages had more consequences than merely reinforcing Muslim organisations. The most important proponents, the colonial government, the woman's movement and the Islamic organisations, had repositioned themselves.

The Islamic upheaval, one of the largest ever organised during the colonial period, forced the government to relinquish its sympathies for feminist demands in order to retain its colonial 'quiet and order' (*'rust en orde'*). In view of the road of consultation the government had decided to walk, one must concede it could hardly have done otherwise. Or it would have lost the confidence of an influential and until then loyal apolitical mass movement, the NU, with ramifications in the rural areas. The government lived under the impression that it could handle urban nationalist parties, the more so because by 1936 and 1937 the *Parindra* and *Gerindo* had returned to cooperate with the government. However, it feared the less-manageable millions. The sheer number of the Muslim masses prevailed over the interests of the Westernised female elite.

Disturbed by the strong emotional impact of its proposal, the Indies government decided in February 1938 to withdraw the measure. The Catholic Minister of the Colonies at that moment, Ch.].I.M. Welter, was an experienced colonial administrator who had pragmatically advised the Governor General on exactly this course of action. Although in principle an advocate of monogamy, he angrily reproached the Indies government for a lack of deliberation with The Hague and lack of caution. In his opinion one could have predicted the situation.

The Indies authorities did not agree; they insisted that the Minister had been informed. They had not expected such an outcry of public indignation. Counting their blessings, they noted that in spite of the broad-based range of protest, nowhere had public order been disturbed. Public emotions had remained within the permitted legal boundaries. Their strategy of sounding out public opinion was the most cautious way to introduce new policies, in their opinion. But Islamic leaders had neglected to notice that this legislation was only aimed at the 'upper ten thousand', and had never been intended to be applied to the masses. The government, however, agreed that the right time for such a measure had not yet arrived and that it should be laid to rest for the time

being. This decision was made public at the end of February 1938, just before the All-Islam Congress at the end of that month (see below)."

As the Adjunct-Adviser of Native Affairs, Pijper, declared in September 1937, the government had learned one lesson: 'the power of Islam'," The colonial government had been painfully reminded of Snouck Hurgronje's teachings, and now readjusted its Islam policy more than ever on the separation of politics and religious issues. From that moment, it acted ever more cautiously, when Islamic matters, women's issues or both were debated. In the census plans of 1940, which due to the war were never administered, questions about polygamy were explicitly excluded 'because of the (...) attributed political meaning'i'" In the contemporary issue of women's suffrage, the government long subordinated and sacrificed feminist interests to orthodox Islamic protests (see chapter 5). It proves the government's extreme carefulness vis-a-vis the Islam in the late 1930s84

A similar nervousness characterised the ongoing debate about legislation of interracial mixed marriages, those between European women and Indonesian (Muslim) men - the original idea behind the proposal. Minister Welter pressed for immediate action in this respect, but he required one amendment to the draft: a restriction of the grounds for divorce in accordance with Dutch law. The Indies government, however, preferred to stick to its more extensive divorce grounds, as included in the marriage law of Christian Indonesians and of the original Draft Ordinance. The government won the argument, but did not speed up legislation: the subject was still just too complicated and too sensitive. The Indies authorities realised that this new ordinance would again offer Muslim men an opportunity to deviate from the general Islamic prohibition of inter-religious marriage. Moreover, the introduction would raise the delicate question of why European women needed 'special protection'. Why curtail the legal rights of Indonesian men, and not those of European women? Why no official regulation of concubinage of non-Islamic (European or Chinese) men with Islamic (Indonesian) women (the *nyai),* which was still a hot topic in the Indonesian press? The deliberations between the Minister and the Governor General were still going on in May 1940 when the German occupation of the Netherlands postponed the entire issue.[85]

The arousal of public opinion had consequences for the Indonesian groups involved as well. The *Bangoen* affair helped initiate the first All-Islam Conference, which was organised at the end of February 1938 by the newly installed *Majelis Islam A'laa Indonesia* (MIAI, Supreme Council of Muslims in Indonesia).'6 Although the NU delegation left the conference before it ended, it revealed a growing Islamic militancy, and a renewed sense of unity. The mar-

riage issue remained on its agenda. The congress agreed to install a committee that would propose a new marriage regulation according to Islamic values. At a second congress one year later the debate on this issue was continued." In 1941, the Islamic federation MIAI also presented a report, with which the women's movement apparently was not very happy.88

The latter preferred its own research, reports and debates. Although both Soewarni Pringgodigdo and Maria Ullfah Santoso personally continued to support the draft, the women's movement withdrew to research positions.s? In July 1938, Maria Ullfah Santoso, vice chair of the CPKIAI and president of the Research Committee of Islamic Marriage Law of the Kongres Perempuan Indonesia (KPI), presented a draft at the third Indonesian Women's Congress. This draft did not mention polygamy or official registration. It focused on the *ta'lik* and divorce, it demanded more power for Islamic judges and alimony for wives after divorce, to be decided by religious courts. In order to remain united, the congress did not decide on these issues. The debates on this advice continued in 1939 as well as at the fourth Women's Congress in 1941. But here no concrete results were booked either.9° The only fruits of all these arguments and deliberations were that the women's movement established marriage consultation offices in urban centres in 1939. Here brides-to-be had to be informed about their rights *(ta'lik).9'*

This solution within the frame of existing institutions was a most realistic approach. Progressive women could not expect much from this government, that had retreated at the very first sounds of opposition at the NU congress in June 1937, and had excluded them from women's suffrage in the very same months of 1937 (June-September), that the debate on the marriage ordinance was raging. This synchronicity cannot have improved the trust in the government. Given this situation, it is understandable why the women's movement preferred a unified Indonesian (women's) movement to an uneasy alliance with an untrustworthy colonial party. Favourable to the draft at first, it gave in to Islamic pressure and conformed to Indonesian realities. It looked for harmony, not for intra-Indonesian quarrels. The Western emancipated woman might have been a model for Kartini, but it was not the ultimate ideal of Indonesian women, as even the chairperson of the most progressive movement, *Isteri Sedar,* stated in 1938.92 The longing for political unity within the Indonesian women's movement, including Islamic women's organisations, prevailed over private demands for an improved married life. In this political request, the women's movement was in tune with the more general tendency to unite, which by the late 1930S existed among a good number of Indonesian parties *(Parindra* and *Gerindo)* and organisations (MIAI). By assembling

women of both Islamic and secular denominations under its federated banner and keeping them together despite the divisive issue of polygamy, the *Kongres Perem-puan Indonesia* can even be considered as a precursor to the *Gabungan Politik Indonesia,* the political federation of secular and religious nationalist parties, founded in '939.

In the issue of monogamy secular women's organisations took a step backward and looked for a translation of their ideals in terms of the Indonesian Islam, the reinforcement of the *ta'lik.* Not only in the colonial period, but also in the post-colonial years when the racial category had been dismissed, their efforts to change the Indonesian marital law in the direction of monogamy failed. They had to struggle until '974, before a marriage law was finally introduced.v' It proved the delicacy of the subject, which the colonial government had dared to touch.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The debate on the marriage ordinance was a women's issue. But it was more than a debate about women and marriage morality, on polygamy, divorce and repudiation. It implied ideas about gender, class and race in a colonial context as well. It offered visions of whiteness/'Europeanness' and 'otherness' and it clarified convictions regarding the religious neutrality of the colonial state and about the boundaries between public and private. Each of these aspects deserves some remarks.

To start with, women were the central symbol in this entire religious struggle. However, various racial and class distinctions determined the views on gender. European women of all classes should be protected against Muslim practices within inter-religious/inter-racial marriage. Female 'Europeanness' was identified with monogamy as all the European persons and groups involved underlined (the Minister of the Colonies, female members of the Dutch Parliament, the male member of the *Stuw* group, European feminists in the Indies and male fascists). European women should maintain this unassailable European right; they ultimately would have been obliged to abide by the marriage legislation, had the draft passed into law. Yet, racial lines were not strictly followed. Voluntary registration would include Indonesian women, creating an 'in-between group' of modern women from the elite. Voluntary registration presumed a certain level of education, which in the colony was also a signal of class difference. Women from the lower classes were excluded;. monogamy would apply to the elite and polygamy to the masses (where it was rare, but not nonexistent).

In the debates the categories of gender, class and race, moreover, intersected with the category of religion. Islam was more than a cultural belief system; it became a political banner, under which Indonesian women as political actors opted for unity within the Indonesian camp. Robbed of governmental support by the furtive withdrawal of the latter and left alone in a simultaneous exclusion of voting rights, they had little reason to trust their former ally in this struggle. They thus dropped the issue of polygamy and took recourse to reinforcing the Muslim custom characteristic of Indonesian Islam, the *ta'!ik,* and pleaded for a more specific divorce regulation in favour of women.

The debate also provided the litmus test of the ambivalences of colonial modernity and state formation along Western lines. The extension of the state into society resulted in an attempted unification of some social institutions, which included the family. The efforts to pour Indonesian married life into a Western mould indicated that the government did see possibilities to modernise Indonesian society from above. Its favourable results with respect to the marriage law of Christian Indonesians, as well as the demands of Indonesian elite women had increased Dutch optimism about this possibility. In front of the fierce Islamic opposition in vain.

Even if nowadays we can read perceptions of gender in the debate itself, that was not the main issue for Muslim groups at the time. For them it revolved around colonial interference with a religious institution. Here the official colonial policy of neutrality in religious matters revealed its Christian roots. Yet, Christian authorities should not meddle with private Muslim customs but should leave this matter of reform to the appropriate Islamic institutions, i.e., a 'modernisation from below'. In this regard, nearly all official Muslim spokespersons agreed that Islamic marriage practices should be reformed. Whether this reform should be achieved within existing Muslim laws or by a change of these laws was a matter of fierce debate. But one thing was certain, it had to remain outside colonial interference. Women and marriage were thus part of the politico-ideological battle over Islam and Islamic institutions in this particular colonial context.

The marriage debate illustrates how and to what extent religion plays a role in processes of nationalism and state formation. Following in the footsteps of the sociologist Marcel Mauss, Peter van der Veer has shown recently that religion is an important ingredient of the latter. Religion may become 'nationalised'; besides language and history, it is one of the fields in which the modern civil subject develops or 'is produced'.[94] In this case, gender interests were subsumed in a desired Indonesian unity and national identity (including religion), also by Indonesian women themselves. It would entail the dismantling of

Kongres Perempoean Indonesia, July 23-28, 1938.

Dutch colonialism and some twenty years of Indonesian independence before Indonesian women saw their priorities reversed by the new marriage law of 1974·

Notes

Minarsih Soedarpo, *Niet Iouter kleine toegenegendheden. Herinneringen van een Indonesische orouui 1924-1952* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1998) 25.

2 Soewarsih Djojopoespito, *Buiten het gareel Indonesische roman* (znd imprint; Utrecht! Amsterdam: De Haan Nrij Nederland, 1946) 123.

3 See for instance Hanneke Ming, 'Barracks Concubinage in the Indies 1887-1920', *Indonesia* 35 (1983) 65-93; Tessel Pollmann, 'Bruidstraantjes. De kolonial roman, de njai en de apartheid' in: Idem, *Brutds traantjes en andere Indische geschiedenissen* (The Hague: Sdu, 1999) 9-31; Sita van Bemmelen, 'The Marriage of Minahasa Women in the Period 1861-1933', in: Elsbeth Locher-Scholren and Anke Niehof eds., *Indonesian Women in Focus. Past and Present Notions* (znd imprint; Leiden: KITLV Press 1992) 181-2°4·

4 Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori eds., *Muslim Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) 83-94; Deniz Kandiyoti ed., *Women, Islam and the State* (Houndsmill: MacMillan Press, 1991).

5 Valentine M. Moghadam ed., *Identity Politics and Women. Cultural Reassertion: and Feminisms in International Perspective* (Boulder/San Francisco/Oxford: Westview Press, '994) IX.

6 Regarding the 1937 marriage draft, see C. Vreede-de Stuers, *L'emancipaiion de laftmme Indonesienne* (Paris/The Hague: Mouton, 1959) 73-86; G.F. Pijper, 'De strijd om de monogamie', *Kokmiale Studien* no. 21 (1937) *470-486;* J. Prins, *Adat en Is/amietische plichten/eer in Indonesie* (The Hague/Bandung: Van Hoeve, 1954) 94-98; Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 19°0-1942* (Singapore etc.: Oxford University Press, 1973) 244-245.

7 In 1930 47% of the Indonesian population was single, in the Netherlands 57%. *Volkstefling Nederlandsch-Indie 1930, VIII Overzicht voor Nederlandscb-Indie* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936) 23; 'Huwelijk', *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indie* (10 vols.; 's-Gravenhage/ Leiden: NijhofflBrill, '9,8-'940) Ill, 117-125.

8 J. Ph. van Hasselt, *De botsingsbepalingen van de huwelijksordonnantie voor Christen-Indonesiers* (Leiden: De Jong, 1952) 17-19.

9 In 1930, 1.9% of the Javanese and Madurese men lived in polygamy. The highest number was found in Central Java (2.4%), in Yogyakarta (2.3%) and Surakarta (2%). Polygamy was more common in the islands outside Java (4%). *Volkstelling van Nederlandscb-Indii 1930, IlL Inheemsche bevolking van Oost-Java* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1934) 50-SI; *VIII Overzicht voor Nederlandsch-Indie* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936) 24-26. Data on child marriage are not given, since in the 1930S statistics were recognised to be defective.

IQ E. Kcddic, 'The Past and Present of Women in the Muslim World', *Journal of World History* 1 (1990) *77-108,* esp. 106.

n 'Islam', *Encyclopaedie,* Il, 171; Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation, 13-14.*

12 C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Nederland en de Islàm* (and imprint; Leiden: Brill, 1915) 60.

13 Snouck Hurgronje, *Nederland, 53-102.* He warned about the *chalifate,* the Pan-Islamic movement and the holy war. Indonesian political parties were not mentioned. Regarding Islam policy see P. van der Veer, *Modern orientalisme. Essays over de uxsterse beschavingsdrang* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1995) 176-202; C. van Dijk ed., 'Nederland en de islam in Indonesie: een terugblik', in: Idem, *Islam en politiek in Indonesie* (Muiderberg: Coutinho, 1988) n-36; W.].A.Kernkamp, 'Regeering en Islam', in: W.H. van Helsdingen en H. Hoogenberk eds., *Daar wèrd wat groots verricht…. Nederlandsch-Indie in de XXe eeuw* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1941) *191-2°7;* G.F. Pijper, 'De Islampolitiek der Nederlandse regering', in: H. Baudet en I,]. Brugmans eds., *Balans van beleid. Terugblik op de laatste halve eeuw uan Nederlandscb-Indie* (Assen: Van Garcum, 1961) *209-222.*

14 Snouck Hurgronje, *Nederland,* 93-94. He had already pointed to the *ta'li'k,* as a means for women to reinforce their position within the boundaries of Islam. Snouck Hurgronje, *Verspreide Geschriften* (6 vols.; Bonn/Leipzig: Schroeder: Leiden: Brill, 1923-1927) IV, 2, 217. The irony of Snouck Hurgronje, a polygamist defending Western married life, has been noted in Van der Veer, *Modern orientalisme, 201.*

15 joost Coté, translation and ed. *On Feminism and Nationalism. Kartinis Letters to Ste!la Zeehande!aar, I899-I90J* (Clayton: Monash University, 1995) 46-48; *Door duisternis tot licht. Gedachten over en ooor het Javaanse volk van Raden Adjeng Kartini* (5th imprint; Amsterdam: Nabrink, 1975) 71-73.

16 F.G.P. Jaquet ed., *Kartini. Brieven aan mevrouw R.M. Abendanon-Mandri en haar echtgenoot en andere documenten* (Dordrecht-Holland/Providence USA: Foris Publications, 1987) translated by Joost Coté, *Letters from Kartini. An Indonesian Feminist I900-I904* (Clayton: Monash University/Hyland House, 1992).

17 *Cnderzoelc naar de mindere welvaart der Inlandsche bevolking op Java en Madoera. IX b3. Verheffing van de lnlandsche vrouw,* (Batavia: Papyrus, 1914) 15, 21,5*.

18 *VerheffingInlandscbe vrouw, 8*.*

19 *Verheffing Inlandsche vrouw,* 88-89' He chaired the Committee for research in the lower rates of prosperity of the native population of Java and Madura (Onderzoek naar de mindere welvaart der Inlandsche bevolking op Java en Madoera).

20 Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 81. This commission was headed by Maria Ullfah Santoso, chair of *Isteri Indonesia.* See also chapter 5.

21 See also Director Department of Justice to Governor-General 18-12-1936, A7/17/16, General State Archives, The Hague, Colonies (Col.), 2.10.54, file Il28.

22 See on the Indonesian women's movement chapters 1 and 5.

23 G.F. Pijper, 'De vrouw en de moskee', in: Idem, *Fragmenta Islamica. Studien over het Islamisme in Nederlandsch-Indie* (Leiden: Brill, 1934) I-58.

24 Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 65, 77-78, 79. In 1931, an urban association of Muslim women, *Sarekat Istri Jakarta* protested against the resolutions of a congress of *Istcri Sedar,* striving for abolition of polygamy.

25 G.F. Pijper, *Srudiin over de Islam in Indonesii I900-I950* (Leiden: Brill, 1977) 10; for a favourable Indonesian opinion on Gobee see *Overzicht van de Inheemsche en Chineesch-Maleische Pers (IPO)* 1937, 803-805, 821. For marriage at young age see Susan Blackburn and Sharon Bessell, 'Marriageable Age: Political Debates on Early Marriage in Twentieth-Century Indonesia', *Indonesia* 63 (April 1997) 107-141.

26 Although Islam did not prescribe marriage at a young age, it did not forbid it either, unless the wife could not 'endure' it. It was often the result of moral as well as economic reasons (the assistance of a son-in-law might be very welcome).

27 Different Javanese Regents, who were Muslims themselves, had already gone to the limit of what was allowed by forbidding penghulu to marry children. Adviser of Native Affairs to Head Department of Interior Affairs, 3-2-1922, no. 95, appendix to Temporary Adviser of Native Affairs to Head Department of Justice 14-6-1923 E/172; Adviser of Native Affairs to Head Department of Justice 14-6-1923, both in CoL, 2.10.54. file Il28.

28 First Government Secretary to Heads Regional Government, 14-12-1925, no 403X and 26-8-1927, no 1753/A2, Col., 2.10.54, file Il28. In 1925 they were warned to inform Regents about government's wishes to forego unpostponed child marriage 'with much tact and care'. Two years later another government circular warned that Indonesian civil servants had gone too far indeed. In many regencies young girls had been compelled to appear before civil servants and to respond to awkward questions about age and puberty. Some

had even been examined physically by the wife of the civil servant, which was forbidden now. The otherwise highly valuable study of Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 75 is misinformed in this respect.

29 Adviser of Native Affairs to Governor General, 9-5-1932, no. 698/F3' Col., 2.10.54, no. II28.

30 First Government Secretary to Heads Regional Government, II-7-1932, Col., 2.10.54, file II28. Organisations contacted were women's organisations like *Isteri Sedar, Sarikat Istri Jakarta, Sarikat Kaum Ibu Sumatera,* and the nationalist organisations *(PBI Persaruan Bangsa Indonesia), PSII, Budi Utomo, Pasundan,* as well as *Muhammadijah.*

31 Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 64. See for requests Report Conference 6-6-1937, Col., 2.10-54, file 612.

32 *Handelingen van den Volksraad* 1932-1933 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij), 2152. It followed the new approach: recognition of *adat* law instead of the unification of the ordinance to European law. The ordinance had been written by the *adat* law expert at the Batavia Law School, prof. B. ter Haar, in close cooperation with the Protestant and Catholic missions. The Minahasa and Ambon Council had not been consulted. The focus on *adat* was reflected in a change of names (from Native Christians to Christian Natives/ Indonesians and in the limited area, which the ordinance covered: only Java and Madura as well as the Minahasa (Menado), Ambon, Banda and Saparua. Other areas might have different *adat* regulations to take into consideration, which required further research. The bill was discussed again in 1936, shortly before its introduction on January I, 1937- Only at that debate the age limit was finally decided upon. See Col., 2.10.54, file 613. An interesting aspect were the articles concerning mixed Christian-Muslims marriages by which the Muslim partner was bound to monogamy. The ordinance thus did not adapt to the prohibition of interreligious marriage for Muslims

33 In this repect, it was even more progressive than Dutch law, since it allowed for divorce for physical reasons, meaning when the partner was unfit for marriage, or for reasons of 'incurable discord', neither of which had been accepted in the Netherlands. See Memorie van Toelichting, *Handefingen van den Volksraad* 1932-1933, onderwerp 17; Minister of the Colonies to Governor-General 25-n-1938, 0 38, in Col., 2.10.54, file 615.

34 Pijper, 'Strijd', 476-491, esp. 490. At the end of the 1930S moral conservatism was not only expressed in the officials' care for marriage and the family but also in the prosecution of homosexuality. See Gosse Kerkhof, 'Het Indische zedenschandaal: een koloniaal incident' (Unpublished M.A thesis, Department of History, University of Amsterdam, 1982).

35 Gouw Giok Siong, *Segi-segi hukum peraturan perkawinan tjampuran* (Djakarta: Pertjetakan Express, 1955). The wish to protect European women had not been made explicit and was mentioned only incidentally in the debate, for instance in the clever defence of polygamy by the legal expert T. Moehammad Hasan, *Ontwerp-ordonnantie op de ingeschrevenhuwefijken* (Buitenzorg: Buitenzorgsche drukkerij, 1937) 6-8.

36 J. Kollewijn, 'Gemengde huweliken tussen europese meisjes en mohammedaanse indonesiers', *De Stuw* I (1930), no. 10, 4-9; Ann Stoler, 'Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial

Southeast Asia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (1992) 514-515, esp. 536-545. That the European woman gained property rights and legal autonomy on a larger scale than in Europe was easily forgotten.

37 Kollewijn, 'Gemengde huweliken', 9. The Islamic law system that was influential in Indonesia, the Shafi'i, did not recognise these marriages, but a man could take recourse to the more permissible Hanafi law.

38 A. van Marle. 'De groep der Europeanen in Nederlandsch-Indie, iets over ontstaan en groei', *Indonesii* 5 (1952) 320, 336, *340.* The number grew to 3%. European women might marry Indonesians studying in the Netherlands; Soetan Syahrir is an example. Often Indonesian men, who opted for inter-religious marriage, had been *'gelijkgesteld* (equalised): they had been granted the legal position of Europeans on the ground of their socio-cultural position in society, which implied monogamy. Hadji Agus Salim, leading figure of the *Partai Serekat Islam Indonesia* and later of its offshoot *Barisan Penyedar-PSII,* is one of those.

39 Kollewijn, 'Gemengde huweliken, 6.

40 See chapter 5.

41 See *Maandblad van de Vereeniging voor Vrouwenrechten in Nederianscb-Indie* VII, 9, July 1933; VIII, 3, December 1933; VIII, 4, January 1934; VIII, 5, February 1934; VIII, 7, April 1934; VIII. 9, June 1934·

42 MaandbladVII, 9, July 1933·

43 Colijn pressed for quick action in 1933, 1934, and twice in 1935 and 1936. Col., 2.10.54, file 614. The draft had been written in close cooperation between the Department of Justice and the Office for Native Affairs. The colonial archives in The Hague do not possess copies of the internal discussion between both institutions. Director Department of Justice to Governor-General, 18-12-1936 A7h7/16, Col., 2.10.54, file 614.

44 Director Department of justice to Governor-General, 18-12-1936 A7/17/16, Col., 2.10.54, file 614. Other grounds were emprisonment for more than two years during the marriage, physical abuse, lack of financial support by the man for over two months, and physical illness.

45 Director Department of Justice to Governor-General, 18-12-1936 A7/q/16, Col., 2.10.54, file 614.

46 G. Spivak, quoted in Peter van der Veer. 'The Moral State: Religion, Nation and Empire in Victorian Britain and British India', in: Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann eds., *Nation and Religion. Perspectives on Asia and Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) *30.*

47 Staler, 'Sexual Affronts', 542-543.

48 Colonial labour policies illustrated a similar pattern of class differentiation. See chapter 2.

49 The few available European reactions informed the European public about the debate, without taking part in it. Pijper, 'Strijd'; HT. Damste, 'De Mohammedaansche wet in Indie: afbrokkeling van den Oosterschen staat in den sraar', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift 27* (1938) 138-142; EL. Bakker, 'De huidige geesteshoudingvan den Islam in Nederlandsch-Indie', *De Macedoniir* 42 (1938) 347-348, zie oak 372-377, 378-381; H.C., 'Het einde van een veclbesproken ontwerp van wetgeving', *KoloniaalTijdschrift* 27 (1938) 504-505.

50 Among those present were Maria Ullfah Santoso *(Isteri Indonesia),* Siti Soendari, one of the earliest feminists, Mrs Datoe Toemenggung (of the Sumatran *SKIS),* Soewami Pringgodigdo *(Isteri Sedar),* Mrs Mahadi, the sister of the Islamic leader A. Salim. See 'Conferentie met vertegenwoordigers van verschillende vereenigingen en groepen van vrouwen, op zondag 6 juni 1937 ten huize van den Adviseur voor Inlandsche Zaken, Salcmbalaan 4', Col., 2.10.54, file 614.

51 For instance Maria Ullfah Santosa, Siti Soendari (who had been protesting against polygamy already in 1914), Mrs Kartowijono of *Isteri Indonesia,* Mrs. Soesilawati of *Taman Siswa,* Mrs Wiriaatmadja of *Pasundan Isteri.*

52 Verslag (Report) XIIe Congres, *Nahdatul Ulama,* Col., 2.10.54, file 614.

53 Adviser of Native Affairs to Director Department ofJustice, 29-1-1938, no I27/ca 3, Col., 2.10.54, file 615.

54 *Hande!ingen VOlksraadI937-I938,* 225; 507; 5IJ-514; 522-523.

55 *PandjiIslam* 4 no. 23,15-8-1937, 494, 505.I am grateful to Lieneke Hofman for this information.

56 Audry Kahin, *Rebellion to Integration. West Sumatra and the Indonesian polity* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000, 85).

57 Pijper, 'Strijd'. The leader of the *BP-PSII,* A. Salirn, seemed moderate: he asked for an Islamic commission with advisory powers, recognised by the government to be consulted about the ordinance, the authority of the *Raad Agama* and the proposed Court for Islamic Affairs. But his opposition was no less firm; *Overzicht van de Inheemsche en Maleisch-Chineesche Pers (IPO)* 1937, 447-448; 473.The *PSII* discussed the subject at its conference in July. *Muhammadijah* came out with its statement in October *(Pedoman Masjarakat* 20-10-1937, 807-808). The *JIB* rejected the concept at its conference in December 1937. R.C. Kwantes, *De ontwikkeling van de nationalistische beweging in Nederlandscb-Indie* (4 vols.; Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff/Bouma's Boekhuis, 1975-1982) IV, 456, 492.

58 *IPO* '937, 72I.

59 See for a copy Comire Oemmat Islam Poerworedjo to Queen Wilhelmina, 28-10-1937, Col., 2.10.54, file 614.

60 *IPO* 1937, 499; *Pedoman Masjarakat,* 7-7-1937, 497-498. These arguments followed those of J. Wibisono, editor of the student journal *Islamic Reveil,* presented in his booklet *Huwelijk, polygamie en echtscheiding in den Islam* (Batavia 1937), reprinted as *Monogami atau poligami. Masalah sepanjang masa* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1980).

61 *IPO* 1937, 565. The same arguments also in Hasan, *Ontwerp-ordonnantie, 22.*

62 *IPO* '937, 847·

63 Rasoena Said in *PandjiIslam,* Hasan, *Ontwerp-ordonnantie,* 7.The second *PPI* Congress had asked for a prohibition already in 1929, the *Nahdatul Ulama* did the same in 1934; It had been repeated in 1936 by Mrs Datoe Toemenggung, while *Pasundan* and *Pasundan Istri* had asked for at least a legal regulation of her position. Kongres Wanita Indonesia, *Sejarah Setengah Abad Pergerakan Wanita Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1978) 37; Adviser of Native Affairs to Governor-General 28 November 1934, Col., 2.10.36.06, file 154 mailreport 927 secret/rojy. Col; Ch. Sj. Datoe Toemenggung, 'Bestrijding van den

vrouwenhandel', in: M.A.E. van Lith-van Schreven and J.H. Hooykaas-van Leeuwen Boomkamp eds., *Indisch Vrouwenjaarboek I936* (Jogjakarta: KoIff-Buning) 55-57, esp. 57; Pijper 'Strijd', 489.

64 *IPO* 1937, 473; also Hasan, *Ontwerp-ordonnantie*, 12. Contrary to similar nationalist debates about women in India, the argument that women belonged to the private realm, and were not to be touched by colonialism, was not the argument of secular nationalists in Indonesia, but only of Muslim Indonesians (see also below). C£ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments. Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton. N]: Princeton: University Press, 1993) 132.

65 *IPO* '937, 451 and 562.

66 *IPO* 1937, 498, Zie ook *Panji Islam* 4, no 23, 15-8-1937) 497-500. Verslag XIIe congres Nahdatoel Oelama, 5-8-1937, Col., 2.10.54, file 614.

67 Merie-Aimee Helie-Lucas, The Preferential Symbol for Islamic Identity. Women in Muslim Personal Law', in: Valentine M. Moghadam ed., *Identity Politics and Women. Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective* (Boulder/San Francisco/ Oxford: Westview Press, 1994) 391-408.

68 This is reflected in the press reports and debates at various Muslim congresses of that period.

69 *IPO* 1937, 450-451. Sanusi Pane was a Batak poet and influential journalist, who headed the Gerindo affiliated Indonesian daily *Pemandangan* (Batavia).

70 *IPO* 1937, 844. *Parindra* and *Gerindo* had over 4600 members in 1937. M.C. Ricklefs, *A History Of Modern Indonesia Since c. IJOO* (an imprint; HoundsmilllLondon: MacMillan, 1991) 19I.

71 *IPO* 1937, 585; Ricklefs, *A History, 189.*

72 Pijper, 'Strijd', 485-488.

73 *IPO* '937, 770.

74 At the PSII congress of July 1937 a female speaker declared, that although she had serious problems with polygamy and divorce, she totally opposed the draft, since Allah's law was perfect in itself Pijper, 'Strijd', 489.

75 *IPO* '938, 692; '938, 434·

76 Siti Soemandari, 'Huwelijksordonnantie en vrouwenemancipatie', *Bangoen* I, no 8 (15-10-1937) 114-12°; I, no. 9 (l-n-I937) 131-135; 1 no. 10, (5-II-1937) 147-15°. She had written her article at the end of September 1937, when the issue was being debated at a fever pitch.

77 Introduction by Soeroto, the editor in *Bangoen* I, no. 8, 114.

78 *IPO* '937 77'-772, 801-802, 846-853; '938, '3·

79 *IPO* 1937, 848-851; 1938, 98, 145·

80 *IPO* '938, 40-43, 146.

81 See letters in vb. 22-6-1938, no 13, Col., 2.10.54, file 615.

82 Pijper, 'Strijd', 490.

83 E.F. Drion, 'De Volkstelling van 1940', *Koloniale Studiin* 1939,585.

84 The government did not comply with all of the Islamic demands: heritage matters were left to be decided in the secular courts, article 177 of the Indies 'constitution', which

required government approval of Christian missions, was abolished at the end of the 1930S. Islam policies of the 1930S deserve more in-depth research.

85 For this debate see Col, 2.10.54, file 615.

86 Noer, *Modernist Muslim Movement, 244.*

87 Kwantes, *Ontwikkeling,* IV, 664-667'

88 IPO 25-7-[94', 987.

89 See *IPO* 5-3-1938, no 10, 162-163; 29-7-1939, no. 30, 543-544.

90 IPO 30-8-1941, no. 35, 1022. For an elaborate survey of her ideas see Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 83-85, and *IPO* 29-7-1939, no *30,* 543-544; 25-7-1941, no. 27, 987.

91 Vreede-de Stuers, *Emancipation,* 83-85. Mediation of the *penghulu* was required in case of divorce by *talâk.* The *ta'lik* formula should be extended to other grounds than polygamy or lack of subsistence and should also include adultery, alcoholism or imprisonment, and 'unsurmountable discord', which had also been included in the 'Draft Ordinance on Registered Marriages'. Snouck Hurgronje had already recommended a strenghthening of the *ta'lik.* See note 14. For a positive appraisal of the *ta'lik* see also Daniel S. Lev, *Islamic Courts in Indonesia. A Study in the Political Bases of Legal Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972) 144.

92 IPO 1938, 158.

93 June S. Katz and Ronald S. Katz, 'The New Indonesian Marriage Law: A Mirror of Indonesia's Political, Cultural and Legal Systems', *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 23 (1975); Idem and idem, 'Legislating Social Change in a Developing Country: The New Indonesian Marriage Law Revisited', *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 26 (1978) 3°9-320; Nani Soewondo, 'The Indonesian Marriage Law and its Implementation Regulation', *Archipel* 13 (1977) 283-294; Deliar *Noer, Administration of Islam in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1978) 51-52. The law relegated divorce to the Islamic courts, allowed polygamy under certain conditions to he decided by the court and raised the minimum marriage ages to 16 for women and 19 for men. According to Katz and Katz, the law accelerated already existing trends. They have ascribed its success to the law's moderate stipulations, its allowance for diversity, its constructive political symbolism and its translation to the grass roots level by many (semi-) private organisations. In the 1930S the Indonesian women's movement was not the only one who failed to reach its marriage goals. The All India's Conference initiated the Hindu Code Bill of 1934 suggesting a ban on polygamy, legalisation of divorce and an equal division of the inheritance between wife and son. It sank in a sea of opposition as did a second proposal in 1943. Sucheta Mazumdar, 'Moving Away from a Secular Vision? Women, Nation and the Cultural Construction of Hindu India', in: Valentine M. Moghadam ed., *Identity Politics and Women. Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective* (Boulder/San Francisco/Oxford: Westview Press, 1994) 243-273, esp. 261.

94 Van der Veer, 'The Moral State', 19.

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Glossary

abangan	Muslim, influenced by Javanese religious customs
adat	customary law, traditional customs
agama	religion
amok	sudden explosion of rage
ani-ani	Indonesian rice knife
babu	nursemaid
batik	cotton print
bébé	wide long-sleeved women's dress
bedienden (D)	servants
bediendenpassen (D)	letters of recommendation for servants
bibit	young (ncejplant
blijver (D)	permanent resident
buruh rani	agricultural labourer
concordantie (D)	principal of comparable systems between metropole and colony
desa	village
gudang	provision store
guna-guna	witchcraft
halus	composed behaviour, refined manners
haram	forbidden
hutspot(D)	hodge-podge (meal)
ibu yang sejati	the true woman/mother
isteri	woman,wife
jahir	seamstress
Jongos	houseboy
kaftr	heathen
kahar angin	rumour, sound of the wind
kampung	village or city quarter
kawin gantung	unconsummated marriage
kebaya	overblouse or jacket
kebon	gardener
kecukupan	those who have just enough
kekurangan	those who have too little

kokkerellen (D)	to cook a small speciality
kokki	cook
kutang	under-chemise
kyai	Islamic teacher
mandur	overseer, surveyor
memsahib	white woman
murbah	allowed
nijverheidsonderwijs(D)	household/technical training
nyai	Indonesian (or Japanese) concubine
nyonya	married lady
opheffing (D)	uplifting (economic)
panas	hot
padi	rice
padi gadu	second rice harvest from sawah in east monsoon
padi gaga	rice on dry ground
pendopo	large hall
penghulu	Islamic official
pergerakan	{nationalist} movement
perskot	advanced money
polowijo	secondary crops and crops on dry land
priyayi	Javanese nobility
puasa	Islamic fasting
regent	Indonesian ruler, civil servant, head of a regency
rust en orde (D)	quiet and order
rijsttafel (D)	meal of rice with many additional dishes
santri	orthodox muslim
sarong	batiked cloth, worn as long skirt
sawah	flooded rice fields
selir	eo-wife
s(e)pen	houseboy
shantung	variety of silk
sharia	Islamic law
slametan	religious meal
ta'Iik	wedding formula stating preconditions for divorce by a woman
talek	repudiation formula
rani	farmer
totok	newcomer not horn in the Netherlands-Indies
Tropisch Nederland (D)	Netherlands in the tropics
tukang	artisan, skilled labourer
ulama	Islamic preacher
verindischen (D)	to go native
voorschot (D)	advanced money
wedono	Javanese civil servant

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This book deals with the ambiguous relationship between Indonesian and European women and the colonial state in the former Netherlands Indies (or Dutch East Indies) between 1900 and 1942. How did women of different racial backgrounds relate to each other and to 'the colonial project'? How did the colonial state address women's issues? What were the constructions of gender which dominated the discourse on these issues?

These questions are answered in five essays on subjects in which women figure prominently: Indonesian women's labour, Indonesian servants in colonial homes, Dutch colonial fashion and food, the feminist struggle for the vote, and the public debate about monogamy. Each chapter offers specific examples of the interconnection of the categories of gender, class, race and religion in colonial Indonesia before the Second World War.

The content is based on new data from a variety of sources, such as censuses, colonial archives, rural labour reports, household manuals, children's fiction and Indonesian press surveys. An introductory essay combines the outcomes of the case studies and relates those to ongoing debates within the history of colonialism. The book thus provides the reader with new insights in the social dynamics of colonial society and politics in relation to gender.

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